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WDC Newsletter – July 2023

From the President

Tazeen Ahmad



“The world is full of what seem like intractable problems. Often, we let that paralyze us. Instead, let it spur you to action.”

— Melinda Gates

On June 20, 2023, WDC held our annual meeting and biennial elections at the beautiful, historic Glen Echo Park with two exciting guest speakers — Lt. Governor Aruna Miller and Congressman Jamie Raskin. It felt truly celebratory as we recognized the outstanding work done by the outgoing executive committee under the terrific leadership of Diana Conway, and unanimously elected a new slate of officers.

Congratulations to the new executive committee. And thank you to the WDC membership for giving me the opportunity to lead the club for the next two years. It's my honor to serve as WDC president, and I'm so pleased to be joined by the outstanding executive committee.

Lt. Governor Aruna Miller kicked things off by congratulating WDC for its work in educating and encouraging community engagement and advocacy on progressive issues. She also touted the

behavioral health “that has been stigmatized for far too long.”

Congressman Jamie Raskin had an important announcement of his own — his cancer is in remission. He went on to deliver a rousing speech laying out many democratic policy priorities, including the need for greater investment in America’s middle class, accessible and affordable healthcare, and common-sense gun control legislation. He promised that the Democrats “will defend the outcome of free and fair elections even if we are not the ones that win.” Before closing, Rep. Raskin presented Diana Conway with a Certificate of Congressional Recognition for her “outstanding rock-solid leadership.”

The evening wrapped up with networking, photo ops, and carousel rides.

Now, looking forward to the next two years, WDC plans to continue to be a powerhouse Democratic advocacy organization, working side by side with our partners on substantive legislation. And there is no shortage of issues where our advocacy is needed.

The same week as WDC was, in Jamie’s words, “celebrating a peaceful transition of power,” our nation had two important anniversaries that deserve to be highlighted.

First, June 23 was the 51st anniversary of Title IX, which prohibited any school or education program that receives federal funding from discriminating based on sex. This measure updated the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and while it is often associated with sports, Title IX actually covers all discrimination, including sexual assault and sexual harassment. It was an important milestone in protecting the rights of all students, including the rights of nonbinary and transgender students. In 2022, a Maryland House Committee defeated a Transgender Sports Ban and MCPS continues its policy to “support ALL students, so everyone feels safe, accepted, and valued.” WDC is fully committed to supporting all efforts to preserve and implement Title IX in our state.

Second, June 24 marked the one-year anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court decision on *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*, which overturned the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision that recognized a woman’s Constitutional right to abortion. With the Dobbs decision, the Supreme Court took away the right of women to control their own bodies. Maryland legislators responded by taking strong steps to strengthen reproductive protections and increase access not only for Maryland residents but also for those seeking reproductive care from other states with restrictive laws. WDC has fully supported and will continue to support women’s right to choose and to protect and defend reproductive rights.

However, what I didn’t anticipate is that in less than a week of my drafting my first president’s letter, the Supreme Court would deliver three gut-wrenching decisions, divided along partisan lines with the six Republican appointees in the majority. All three rulings, on affirmative action, student loans, and LGBTQ+ rights, are consistent with the hard-right agenda the same heavily conservative-leaning court handed down on abortion, guns, religion, and climate change last year.

In her dissenting opinion to the Court’s ruling that affirmative action was unconstitutional, Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote “Today, this Court overrules decades of precedent and imposes a superficial rule of race blindness on the Nation.”

Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson joined the dissent, writing, “The best that can be said of the

In a dissent to the 6-3 ruling to block the Biden Administration's loan forgiveness program, Justice Elena Kagan accused the court of "once again" substituting "itself for Congress and the Executive Branch — and the hundreds of millions of people they represent — in making this Nation's most important, as well as most contested, policy decisions."

And finally, the court's ruling in favor of a Christian web designer who refused to serve same-sex couples because of religious exceptions represents a devastating blow to LGBTQ+ protections. Justice Sotomayor nailed it when she wrote that the decision will undermine the government's compelling interest in ensuring that all Americans have equal access to the public marketplace. "The Supreme Court of the United States declares that a particular kind of business, though open to the public, has a constitutional right to refuse to serve members of a protected class," Sotomayor wrote. "The court does so for the first time in its history. "

What each of these landmark decisions underscores is the importance of elections and the real-life implications that not showing up to vote has in our daily lives. The bottom line is that **elections matter**. But it is not enough that we understand that who we put in office at all levels of government will impact our freedoms and our future, we also need to be able to communicate that to family, friends, and members of our larger communities. Voter education, voter registration, and advocacy will all be critical as we move forward.

At WDC, we are committed to these goals, but to be effective we hope to "spur you to action." We need your voice, your participation, and your collaboration in helping us to build effectively a more equitable future so that everyone, regardless of gender identity or expression, sex, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, national origin, race, religious affiliation, or any other attribute can reach their full potential and thrive. No problem is insurmountable or intractable if we work together.

Tomorrow, as we commemorate the passage of the Declaration of Independence by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, we are reminded that Democracy is a work in progress, and we are continuously striving to achieve a more perfect union.

Stay Strong. Stay Focused. Stay United.

Tazeen Ahmad

2023 - 2024 Executive Team!



TAZEEN AHMAD
PRESIDENT



GLORIA APARACIO BLACKWELL
1ST VICE PRESIDENT



LISA FULLER
2ND VICE PRESIDENT



MELISSA BENDER
3RD VICE PRESIDENT



JOANNE KORAVOS
SECRETARY



MARY LOU FOX
TREASURER

Keeping Up with Our State Legislators



Ryan Spiegel Nominated to be D17 Delegate

WDC congratulates **Ryan Spiegel** on securing the MCDCC nomination as D17 Delegate. Currently a Gaithersburg City Councilmember, Spiegel won on the second ballot over a crowded field. He will be replacing Kumar Barve, who has taken a position in the Moore administration.

Read complete coverage in [Maryland Matters](#).

What You May Have Missed

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

BIENNIAL MEETING and WDC Officer Elections

featuring Special Guests
Congressman Jamie Raskin
and **Lt. Gov. Aruna Miller**

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 | 6:30 PM
Glen Echo Park Bumper-Car

TICKETS
Free to WDC Members
\$38 Non-Members, 36 and older
\$25 Non-Members, 35 and younger
Costs less to become a WDC member!

All current WDC members who are present may vote.
Register at: bit.ly/meeting-june20

2023 WDC Officer Slate

President	Tazeen Ahmad
1st Vice President	Gloria Aparicio Blackwell
2nd Vice President	Lisa Fuller
3rd Vice President	Melissa Bender
Secretary	JoAnne Koravos
Treasurer	Mary Lou Fox

Join us for an in-person reception to celebrate another year of activism and community-building, and to elect our new WDC Executive Committee.

2023 WDC Biennial Meeting, with guest speakers Lt. Governor Aruna Miller and Congressman Jamie Raskin.



WDC 2023 Juneteenth Celebration, featuring guest speaker Reynauld Smith.

In Memoriam

Daphne Bloomberg — 1942-2023

We are sad to announce that Daphne Bloomberg, former two-term president of WDC, passed away on June 22, 2023. Dedicated to her family and friends, Daphne was a mentor, friend, loyal supporter, and fundraiser for many Democratic elected officials at the local, state, and federal levels. We will sorely miss Daphne, her friendship, and her extraordinary contributions to Montgomery County and our Democratic Party.

Donations in Daphne's memory may be made to the [National Brain Tumor Society](#).

To notify the family when making a donation, please use this information:

Lauren Layman
7825 Overhill Road
Bethesda, MD 20814.

To view the obituary, [CLICK HERE](#).







WDC Membership

If you haven't already done so, renew online [here](#). You may also mail your \$35.00 annual dues (\$25 for members 35 years old or younger) payable to "WDC" and mail to: WDC, PO Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827.

By renewing your membership, you are building community and political muscle with other Democratic members, clubs, and allies to elect Democrats and support progressive Democratic policy goals. WDC is excited to work with each of you, as we advocate for our WDC priorities, and present our Speakers Programs, Community Education Panels, social events, and service projects. Join us!

Make a Difference—Volunteer with WDC!

- Membership Co-Chair
- Finance Committee Member
- Communications Committee Members
- Advocacy Committee Members

Interested? To learn more, please contact [Tazeen Ahmad](#) and make sure to use the subject line: "Volunteering with WDC."

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