



Piscataway Challengers Announce Primary Slate

Bill Irwin for Mayor, Ralph Johnson, Laura Leibowitz and Kamuela “Nikki” Tillman for Council, are the Democrats on Your Side

Piscataway, NJ – Community leaders with decades of experience as committed volunteers announced today that they will be running in the June 2 Democratic Primary for Mayor and Council. Bill Irwin, Ralph Johnson, Laura Leibowitz and Kamuela “Nikki” Tillman issued the following statement about their campaign to bring new voices and new leadership to Piscataway.

“We are running together for Mayor and Council because we believe that Piscataway’s government should be for the benefit of all of the people who live here, not for the political insiders. We believe the government should be open and transparent, not conducting business and making deals behind closed doors. We believe that the people’s voices should be heard, not shut down when they come to our government with concerns. We believe in tax fairness, not tax breaks for developers and campaign contributors. We believe in fighting Donald Trump and the forces that led to his election by returning the Democratic Party to its root. The Party must be the champion of working and middle-class families, not the tool of the wealthy and corporations. We believe in political, social, economic, and environmental justice.

“To Piscataway Democrats, we say that you will have a real choice for Mayor and At-Large Council representatives. We are the Democrats on your side. We believe in being honest and conducting ourselves with integrity. We believe in you, and we’re in this together,” the statement said.

Mayoral candidate Bill Irwin served six years on the Piscataway Board of Education, four of which he was the President. During his two terms, he oversaw unprecedented success in the District’s fiscal responsibility, labor relations and student achievement, with the District receiving three Magna Awards from the National School Board Association including the national Grand Prize for the “You, I, We, Inspire” campaign.

At-Large Council candidates Kamuela “Nikki” Tillman and Laura Leibowitz are both special education teachers and both won election as County Committee members as challengers in last year’s Democratic primary. Together, they fought for and won a court ruling that ended a 70-year-old rule that discriminated against women and non-binary candidates. Tillman is an accomplished vocalist and bodybuilder. Leibowitz has served on the boards of the NJ District of Kiwanis International, AttachAvi Autism and Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple. At-Large Council candidate Ralph Johnson, a law

enforcement professional and educator, was re-elected to the Piscataway Board of Education for a third term last November and had previously run for Assembly in 2017. After his 2017 campaign, he was removed from his volunteer position with the Piscataway Recreation department by the municipal government.

The ticket has been endorsed by the Piscataway Progressive Democratic Organization (PPDO) and will hold a campaign kick-off event on Saturday, March 14 at 1:00 PM in front of the Piscataway Community Center.

“Building the Community Center was a 40-year promise that only came to fruition after progressive challengers ran for council seats in 2018,” said Irwin. “The same career politicians who have been in the same offices have been making the same promises for decades, and they only act when they are forced to do so. We are the Democrats who get things done for all of the people of Piscataway because we are on their side.”