



Vote Kids! 2022 Campaign Fund

Ensuring the Next Congress Invests in Our Future

Candidates for the 2023 House: A Freshman Class for Our Future

Yadira Caraveo (CO8), Jay Chen (CA45), Greg Landsman (OH1), Liz Mathis (IA2), Wiley Nichol (NC13), Josh Riley (NY17), Emilia Sykes (OH13), Tony Vargas (NE2), Gabe Vasquez (NM2), and Michelle Vallejo (TX15) not only are seeking seats in competitive House districts but have strong records and expertise on child and family issues. In addition to committing with their colleagues to develop a 21st century infrastructure for children, they bring collective expertise on core child and family issues and represent voices for the future. Given their current status as candidates, the Steering Committee of the Vote Kids! 2022 Campaign Fund has selected them for funding.

The Steering Committee is tracking their races and also has identified other excellent candidates for the House as difference makers: **Christy**

Smith (CA27), Nikki Budzinski (IL13), Hillary Scholten (MI3), and Jamie McCleod Skinner (OR5).

Below are biographical sketches of the ten candidates selected for initial funding, followed by the four candidates the Steering Committee is tracking for future funding priorities, based upon developments during the campaign.



Dr. Yadira Caraveo (Colorado)

Yadira Caraveo wanted to help in ways she couldn't achieve by solely being a doctor, so she ran and became a state legislator. Yadira worked to pass legislation to lower the cost of prescription drugs, drastically limit toxic pollution, expand funding for preschool, ensure all Coloradans have access to paid family and sick leave, and protect renters from eviction during the pandemic. President Obama named Yadira a Champion of Change for her work with the Union of Concerned Scientists in the fight against climate change. Even with her busy legislative schedule, Yadira continues working as a pediatrician and added extra weekend hours so she can see her patients. In Congress, she will continue working for families and fighting to elevate the voices of those long-ignored in Washington.



Jay Chen (California)

Jay Chen has dedicated his life to public service. Jay earned a Navy ROTC scholarship to attend Harvard University. He has served honorably from the Korean Peninsula to the Middle East and played a key role in the reserves with the military's response to COVID-19. Jay has served as a community college trustee and school board member in Orange County. Jay is also committed to expanding access to education. He's running for Congress so that all children have the opportunity he was given, and to restore integrity and accountability in Washington, D.C.



Greg Landsman (Ohio)

Greg Landsman has dedicated his career to making life better for children and families and is running to make sure the residents of OH-01 are well-represented in Washington. After decades of advocating for issues affecting children and youth, Greg was elected to the Cincinnati City Council. During his tenure on city council, Greg advanced comprehensive legislation on issues like eviction prevention, good government ethics, criminal justice, and equitable, growth-centered

development. He fought consistently for youth jobs, affordable housing, comprehensive preschool, domestic violence prevention, small business support, and helped raise wages for city workers and strengthen relationships with local labor unions.



Liz Mathis (Iowa)

Liz Mathis has been an Iowa state Senator since 2011 and is a lifelong Iowan and a problem-solver who can deliver results. As a journalist for nearly 30 years, Liz held powerful interests accountable, shining a light on issues affecting Iowans -- from the farm crisis to health care to the opioid epidemic. In 2011, Liz was elected to the Iowa state Senate. As a state senator, Liz has been a champion for families struggling with the state's Medicaid program and created numerous measures that focused on children and Iowa's economic and educational growth. Liz has also helped lead a non-profit, Four Oaks, that supports and provides services to children and families who need mental health care, housing, and basic needs.



Wiley Nickel (North Carolina)

Wiley Nickel has been fighting for working families in the state senate and in North Carolina. As a criminal defense attorney for the past decade, Wiley works every day to see that his clients are treated fairly by the North Carolina justice system. Before opening his law practice, Wiley worked for two White House administrations, including President Obama's. Wiley has dedicated his life to improving the quality of life for hard-working families across North Carolina. From voting rights to quality public education to reproductive health care, As a state senator, Wiley worked across the aisle to get things done, including passing legislation to expand rural broadband and protect victims of domestic abuse.



Josh Riley (New York)

Josh Riley is a fifth-generation upstate New Yorker who got his start in public service in Washington before graduating from law school. Josh then served as General Counsel to Senator Al Franken on the Senate Judiciary Committee, where he ushered two bills through the legislative process — one that created new rights for survivors of domestic violence, and the other to provide new funding for addiction treatment and mental health programs. As an attorney, Josh has fought for health care reform, stronger campaign finance laws, and helped veterans fight through red tape to receive

the benefits they deserve. He is a strong advocate for advancing equity of opportunity for children through health, education, and human services.



Emilia Sykes (Ohio)

Emilia Sykes has been working to level the playing field for the people of Ohio as a state representative since 2014. Emilia made history when she was the first Black female lawmaker under the age of 30 to serve in the Ohio state Legislature. She has worked to expand opportunity for families in northeast Ohio and fought for tax cuts for working families, higher wages, and safer working conditions. Emilia has received numerous awards for her advocacy, including the Legislator of the Year from the Ohio Minority Business Enterprise and the Champion of Children award from Summit Children's Services. She'll bring that same passion and commitment to Washington to stand up for the people she represents.



Tony Vargas (Nebraska)

Tony Vargas has devoted his career to public service. He is a former public school teacher and member of the Omaha Public School Board, and he has served in the Nebraska Legislature since 2016. He was re-elected in 2020 with more than 75% of the vote, the largest margin of any incumbent lawmaker in the legislature. As a state senator, Tony successfully passed legislation to strengthen public schools, improve access to health care, encourage technology and innovation, and improve consumer protections.



Gabe Vasquez (New Mexico)

Gabe Vasquez is a first-generation American and a champion for working families. In 2013, after helping build one of Las Cruces' most successful startup companies, Gabe joined Senator Heinrich's staff and worked to solve problems for New Mexico businesses, communities, and families. Gabe was elected to the Las Cruces City Council and has delivered millions of dollars to create and improve parks, update the district's infrastructure, promote policy that created thousands of jobs, and help craft a comprehensive development plan that focuses on lifting families out of poverty. Previously, Gabe served as the executive director of the Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, worked in public lands conservation, and served as a policy advocate promoting child welfare and family wellbeing at the federal level.



Michelle Vallejo (Texas)

Michelle Vallejo is a small business owner, community leader, and women's empowerment advocate. Michelle returned to Texas to help her father run their family business, where she co-founded the New Leaders Council STX Frontera chapter, which helps progressive community leaders across sectors advance equity in South Texas.

She also co-founded Hustle + Socialize, an annual women's entrepreneurship conference providing resources and support for minority women in business. Most recently, Michelle helped immigrant rights' organizations transcribe interviews conducted with parents and children separated at the border, used to inform the Biden administration Task Force on reuniting separated families. Michelle is a passionate advocate and will be a champion in Congress for hard-working families.



Nikki Budzinski (Illinois)

Nikki Budzinski has spent her life fighting for workers and working families and was inspired to devote her life to public service after interning for former Congressman Dick Gephardt, former Senator Paul Simon, and Planned Parenthood. As Governor JB Pritzker's senior advisor on labor issues, Nikki successfully led the charge to

raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour. She promotes a strong public education system, including making pre-kindergarten education truly universal, along with greater investments in high-quality child care programs while also addressing the twin problems of affordability and accessibility for working families.



Hillary Scholten (Michigan)

Hillary Scholten is an attorney and mother of two who has dedicated her life to helping people. Hillary's call to service drew her to social work, where she helped members of the LGBTQ+ community who faced housing discrimination. She then went to law school, clerked for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second

Circuit, and worked for the Department of Justice (DOJ) under the Obama Administration. She returned to Michigan to work for the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center to handle the growing immigration crisis, protect Michigan families, and defend the Constitution and served as a volunteer attorney for Times Up Legal Defense Fund,

an organization that provides legal service to women who face sexual harassment in the workplace.



Jamie McCloud-Skinner (Oregon)

Jamie McLeod-Skinner is an emergency response coordinator, small business owner, engineer, and attorney. Jamie began her public service repairing schools and hospitals in Bosnia and Kosovo before returning to the U.S. to manage refugee resettlement programs. She served as an elected board member of the Jefferson County Education Service District, was a former board member of the Northwest Health Foundation, and was appointed by Governor Kate Brown to serve on the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board. Her priorities for working people are to invest in affordable housing, healthcare, homecare, childcare, special and early childhood education, and affordable higher education.



Christy Smith (California)

Christy Smith served in the California General Assembly, where she authored nine bills focusing on education reform, homeowner protections, college affordability and good governance, signed into law by Governor Gavin Newsom, including a landmark measure that removes barriers for survivors of human trafficking to access victims' compensation. Prior to serving in the Assembly, Christy worked at the United States Department of Education and then on the governing board of the Newhall School District. Her commitment is to advancing educational, social, economic, and environmental equity as a member of the United States Congress.