

## PIMA COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Dec. 22, 2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - Alison H. Jones, a Tucson hydrogeologist, is the new Pima County Democratic Party chair.

Elected to a two-year term at PCDP's biennial organization meeting on Dec. 15, Jones, 60, defeated second-term incumbent Jo Holt in what many party regulars considered an upset. Jones, who campaigned with the slogan, "Expect More," polled 156 votes to Holt's 151.

"I am honored to serve the PCDP for the next two years, during which we will be faced with pivotal elections and initiatives," Jones said. "Building our party has never been more important."

Rounding out the slate of officers are First Vice Chair Luci Messing, Second Vice Chair Joel Feinman, Corresponding Secretary Connie DeLarge, Treasurer Mary Sally Matiella, and Recording Secretary Connor Welton.

Jones has been active in Legislative District 9, heading get-out-the-vote campaigns for the 2018 primaries and midterms in several LD9 territories. She ran on a platform of inclusiveness, building a bench of new-generation candidates, revamping operations at PCDP headquarters, "fearlessly" articulating the party's values, and collaborating with groups that share those values.

"We need to stand for something," Jones said. "Millennials don't care if you have a 'D,' an 'R,' a 'G' or an 'I' after your name; they care about issues," such as climate change, social justice, public education, health care, student debt, affordable housing, racism, immigration, and gun violence.

"Expect More" should apply to all of PCDP's activities, from the leadership to the organization's vision for a future beyond the next election cycle, to the way PCDP treats prospective volunteers, Jones believes.

"I'm asking people to have a broader view of community involvement. Our biggest opportunity is in bringing in the grassroots, because a lot of the credit for our successes in 2018 goes to groups operating outside the party. With the 2020 election barreling toward us like a freight train," the party must start recruiting and training volunteers, overhauling its voter-education, voter-registration and social-media operations, and organizing with allies now if it wants to elect Democrats up and down the ballot in two years, she said.

A senior hydrogeologist and project manager at Clear Creek Associates, the New Orleans-born Jones has worked in environmental consulting for 27 years. She holds geology degrees from Louisiana State University and the Colorado School of Mines.

After moving from Maine to Tucson in 2006 with husband Gerry Lemire, a retired construction manager, Jones served two years as an Environmental Manager for the City of Tucson's Department of Environmental Services, investigating the impacts of old landfills on the city's groundwater.

A past president, secretary and treasurer of the 450-member Arizona Geological Society, Jones serves on the Citizens Water Advisory Committee to Tucson Water. She's an avid hiker, an animal lover and a musician.

Jones called her younger self a "one-issue voter:" reproductive rights, a cause about which she remains passionate.

"With age, my interests have broadened," she said. "And what really spurred me to become engaged more recently was the increasing disparity between rich and poor, and the unprecedented concentration of wealth among the 1%. When the 99% don't have money to buy what the 1% is selling, there will be pain."

That pain is glaringly apparent in Pima County, Jones said.

"PCDP can play a role in mitigating it by helping to elect Democrats who'll advocate for strong public education and other policies that help to level the playing field."

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