

Melissa Galarza, Vice Chair: When I first got involved in politics several years ago, I focused on fighting against politicians who did not align with my values. However, after volunteering in Texas for Beto O'Rourke's campaign in 2016, I quickly realized that I need to shift my attention to working to elect more Democratic candidates into office.

In 2020, I moved back to AZ. After seeing all that was at stake that year, I decided to devote myself to politics at the local level, knowing that my organizational and leadership skills could help in my Legislative District (LD). When the pandemic hit, I started taking action, writing to volunteers and neighbors. That led to social events supporting the community and other outreach to voters in my district. I focused my energy on my immediate community, Ahwatukee, and got to know the many wonderful volunteers there. We all worked hard to help put Joe Biden in the White House that year.

In 2021 I joined the board of LD12 Democrats as the First Vice Chair, and soon thereafter became Acting Chair. In 2022, I was elected as the Chair. In November, I was re-elected for a 2nd term as the Chair. In the 2024 election, I helped lead the way to victory in our legislative district. We re-elected our 3 legislators and won seats for school board members at each of the school districts in our LD. After successfully fundraising over 100K dollars in act blue alone, LD12 sent out 35K letters, 10K postcards, 30K mailers, and canvassed every precinct in our district. Our volunteers distributed over 100K blue voter guides, through canvasses, lit drops and by having volunteers staff every Voting Center in our District on Election Day. Our legislative district recruited 110 new PCs giving us a total of 253 PCs (35% increase) and we now have 84 state committee members, the most in the state.

My goal for the upcoming non-election year is to work with all legislative districts to be more collaborative. If we work together as a team, we can make a big impact on our future. I would like to see a model of shared knowledge implemented across LD's in our state where we can learn from each other and employ best practices across districts. Most of all, I am dedicated to continue the fight for democracy and a better future for all.

Outside of politics, I am married with two adult daughters; one is an educator and one is a physician. I have 9 year old twin granddaughters that motivate me to fight for a better future for them. I'm also a co-owner of a local woman owned small business.