

Illinois Democratic  
County Chairs' Association

# ANNUAL REPORT 2019



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**Illinois Democrats,**  
**we continue to get big things done.**



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear IDCCA Family & Supporters,

I am proud to be a Democrat at this moment in history. Democrats have a hopeful, positive vision in a future that includes all Americans. We believe in truth and fight for equality, opportunity, and fairness. Since the 2016 election, our task to create a more just and fairer nation has been challenging; however, we have had real success in Illinois.

Your support of the IDCCA and its grassroots efforts created Blue Wave victories at every level.

The Blue Wave success produced an historic chain of events culminating with the Democratically controlled Illinois General Assembly and Democratic Governor enacting a progressive legislative agenda. We are now back on the right fiscal track and Illinois is open for business. In addition, the Illinois Blue Wave also won key congressional campaigns giving Democrats back the U.S. House of Representatives, allowing the Honorable Nancy Pelosi to become the Speaker of the House. Under her leadership, the U.S. House passed hundreds of pieces of legislation to help working families, provide needed ethics reforms, and moved to hold this President accountable.

Illinois stands as an example of all the good things we can accomplish with Democrats elected, with Democrats engaged, and with Democrats participating at all levels. Every Democrat, everywhere, counts.

2019 saw the IDCCA building the framework for our continued success by recruiting, training, and providing resources to candidates, County Chairs, County Parties, PCs, and Democratic grassroots volunteers. We traveled the state to hear from our partners, then enacted new training, as well as expanded resources and engagements based on those dialogues.

We are at a unique moment. We are tasked with protecting our democracy and fighting for America. You are key to our success. Everything you do will make a difference.

The IDCCA invites you to join us in two new programs in 2020 - the REV Project and the Election Integrity Program. The REV Project is a grassroots Democrat-to-Democrat outreach effort to identify those who share our Democratic values and engage them to vote. The second is an effort to ensure the integrity of the 2020 election through the use of attorneys & advocates in every county.

We have a lot to do, but many hands make light work. What we do in the months leading to November 2020 is the work of our generation. It is that important. We must turn out every Democrat, everywhere, on Election Day so we can pass the Fair Tax Amendment, keep the Illinois General Assembly a bright blue, return Senator Dick Durbin to the Senate in the majority, keep the U.S. House of Representatives in Democratic control, and elect a Democratic President.

Thank you again for all you do! We could not have been successful without the commitment of our partners and supporters.

Best wishes,

Kristina Zahorik

President, Illinois Democratic County Chairs' Association  
Chair, McHenry County Democratic Party



## COUNTY PARTY BUILDING

The IDCCA trains and mobilizes Democratic volunteers to support Democratic values and the Democratic Party using the County Party structure.

## RESOURCES

The IDCCA provided information on and strategies for party building, access to and training for Votebuilder, support and training for GOTV efforts, access to counsel, a centralized location for best practices, and training for County Chairs, County Party leadership, PCs, and candidates.

The IDCCA President traveled the state as an ambassador and liaison working with county parties, the Democratic Party of Illinois, and with other like-minded organizations. She also provided keynote addresses at several annual County Party fundraisers and events.

The IDCCA maintained staff, Executive Director Dan Kovats and Assistant Executive Director Jillian Hawkins, to field hundreds of calls, emails, and texts from our County Chairs, candidates, and volunteers. Staff also attended and supported numerous County Party and candidate events. They provided a wide range of resources such as election information and strategy, ballot initiative facts, contact with statewide political operations, contact with IDCCA legal counsel, Votebuilder assistance, and messaging.

## 2020 REV PROJECT

The IDCCA continues to assist our County Parties with recruiting the heart of the Democratic Party, Precinct Committeepersons (PC). However, we need to do more to build and strengthen the Democratic Party. The IDCCA began laying the groundwork for 2020 in 2019 with a precinct program called REV Project - Recruit, Engage, Vote. We are determined to increase Democratic turnout by using data to identify voters who share our values but may not identify with us or vote regularly. As part of the first phase of this program, the IDCCA collected and analyzed data from all 102 counties. This effort allows us to gauge how the Party has grown and how it can continue to grow. Moving into 2020, the IDCCA will utilize this information to work with County Chairs, PCs, and volunteers to reach those likely Democratic voters, to understand their issues and concerns, and to turn them into active supporters of the Democratic Party.

## PARTY BUILDER TRAINING

Much of the training schedule for County Parties is tied to the two-year County Party election cycle. In discussions around the state with County Chairs it was determined more training and different training was needed; thus, the IDCCA added new training to the 2019 IDCCA Candidate Boot Camp. Over 30 County Chairs and County Party leadership participated in the new IDCCA Party Builder Training Course. This training focused on fundraising, communications, volunteer recruitment, technology, Get-Out-The-Vote, and social media use. The training allowed County Party leadership from throughout the state to share ideas and network, but more importantly, return to their County Parties as better resources for their organizations and candidates.

## CANDIDATE BOOT CAMP

The IDCCA Candidate Boot Camp continues to grow, drawing energized and motivated Democrats who are interested in serving at all levels of government. The IDCCA partners with the National Democratic Training Committee (NDTC) to provide an intensive and comprehensive three-day Candidate Boot Camp held in Springfield. Democrats interested in running for office were recommended by their County Chairs. In addition to training from the NDTC, the IDCCA brought in relevant guest speakers and elected officials. This year we were honored to hear from **Senator Dick Durbin** and **Governor JB Pritzker**. The three-year-old event has trained close to 400 individuals, with more than 20 being elected or appointed to public office. Check out the inspiring video on IDCCA Boot Camp alumni **State Representative Joyce Mason** by [clicking here](#).

The Candidate Boot Camp was expanded in 2019, to include training for campaign staff and County Party builders.

## COMMUNICATION

Using social media, a digital newsletter, emails, phone calls, and General Membership meetings, the IDCCA promoted Democratic issues and values at the grassroots level. These efforts to promote truth and fact are increasingly important under the Trump Administration. In addition, the IDCCA used its social media platforms and digital newsletter to highlight County Party efforts, Leadership Circle Members, Democratic elected officials, and Democratic successes.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY & PLEDGE

In 2018, the IDCCA was the first statewide organization to develop a sexual harassment policy and pledge for internal use. It includes a step-by-step process on how to report, investigate, and determine resolution for claims of sexual harassment within our organization. It remains in effect for the organization and available to all County Parties and candidates.

## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

The IDCCA hosted seven Executive Board Conference Calls and four General Membership Meetings. Membership Meetings were open to County Chairs or their designee, Leadership Circle Members, and invited guests. Meetings hosted guest speakers on relevant topics like fundraising, mailings & outreach, 2020 REV Project, election review, and the Fair Tax. Speakers included: **ActBlue**, **Steve Booth**, **Randy Jacobs**, **Scott Kennedy**, **the National Democratic Training Committee**, **the Responsible Budget Coalition**, and **the United States Postal Service**.

## HOLIDAY THANK YOU PARTY

The IDCCA hosted a Holiday Thank You Party for our sponsors, Leadership Circle Members, and County Chairs. It was a good networking event for those attending and provided for a working Leadership Circle meeting prior to the event. Special thanks to Mayor of Chicago Lori Lightfoot for attending. Thank you to Leadership Circle Member David Saunders for hosting us.





## STATEWIDE HIGHLIGHTS

The IDCCA is a statewide organization that is a resource to support Democratic values and initiatives, to build the Party, to train Democrats, to provide best practices information, and for event opportunities. In 2019, the IDCCA worked with the Democratic Party of Illinois (DPI), County Chairs, County Parties, partner organizations, and elected officials at every level.

## PRE-INAUGURATION RECEPTION

The IDCCA hosted over 500 people at a lively Pre-Inauguration Reception celebrating the success of the 2018 Blue Wave. Governor-Elect JB Pritzker stopped by to say thank you to the crowd of elected officials, County Chairs, local leaders and activists. It was also an opportunity for state-wide Democrats to meet Kristina Zahorik, our new President, the first woman to hold this leadership position.

## 2020 PRESIDENTIAL POLL

In May 2019, over 7,100 Illinois Democrats voted in the IDCCA Presidential Poll. The participation level was beyond expected and it clearly showed Democrats were already very engaged. It garnered some positive press for the IDCCA, increased online engagement, and enlarged the IDCCA email list. You can view the results of the poll by going to [ildcca.org/2019/06/28/idcca-online-straw-poll-results-put-sanders-on-top/](https://ildcca.org/2019/06/28/idcca-online-straw-poll-results-put-sanders-on-top/).



## DEMOCRATIC PARTY BUILDER AWARD

For the last three years, the IDCCA has honored outstanding Illinois Democrats for their contributions to building the Democratic Party. The IDCCA reviews nominations for possible honorees and determines who receives the prestigious award. The award is presented at the Chicago Reception and at the County Chairs' Brunch in Springfield. In 2019, the IDCCA honored six outstanding Illinois Democrats. At the Chicago Reception, the IDCCA honored 43rd Ward Committeeperson **Lucy Moog**, former President of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 881 & former UFCW International Vice President **Ron Powell**, and long-time public relations professional **Desiree Tate (in memoriam)**. The elegant reception was held at the Iridium Center in the lobby of the office of McGuire Woods. Thank you to LCM John Dunn for hosting us. At the County Chairs' Brunch, the IDCCA honored U.S. Speaker of the House **Nancy Pelosi**, Deputy Majority Leader **Jehan Gordon-Booth** (92nd), and former Congressman **Glenn Poshard**.

## COUNTY CHAIRS' BRUNCH

The County Chairs' Brunch is one of the premier Democratic events in the Midwest and is the largest statewide Democratic event in Illinois. It draws thousands of grassroots supporters to Springfield, serving as the kickoff to Governor's Day at the Illinois State Fair. In 2019, the County Chairs' Brunch was sold out. County Chairs and their County Party membership from all corners of the state were in attendance, as well as our partners representing Labor, activist and issue organizations, members of the IDCCA Leadership Circle, politicians, campaigns, candidates, IDCCA Boot Camp participants, and elected officials from every level of government. Attendees at the Brunch were able to network, stop by informational tables sponsored by presidential campaigns and vendors, see an inspiring video about ordinary people supported by IDCCA training running successfully for office, receive the inaugural remarks from IDCCA President Kristina Zahorik (McHenry), and to hear from other Democratic leaders including Chair of the Democratic Party of Illinois Speaker **Michael Madigan**, President of the Illinois State Senate **John Cullerton**, U.S. Senators **Dick Durbin** and **Tammy Duckworth**, Governor **JB Pritzker**, and U.S. Speaker of the House **Nancy Pelosi**. Speaker Pelosi reminded attendees that Illinois continues to lead the nation in promoting Democratic values and progressive ideas. Her statement, "Be like Illinois" is a call to action for 2020. Elections have consequences. Thank you to all who made the 2019 County Chairs' Brunch the most successful in IDCCA history.

## PARTNER ORGANIZATION SUPPORT

The IDCCA is honored to continue our partnership with the Democratic Party of Illinois, the Illinois Senate Democratic Victory Fund, the Illinois Democratic Women, the Young Democrats of Illinois, and the College Democrats of Illinois. We are also proud to continue relationships with several likeminded organizations such as the **Illinois AFL – CIO**, **Illinois Women's Institute for Leadership Training Academy (IWIL Training Academy)**, **Indivisible Illinois**, **Equality Illinois**, **Planned Parenthood**, **Personal PAC**, **Citizen Action Illinois**, the **National Democratic Training Committee** and the **Illinois Environmental Council**.

An example of some of the work the IDCCA does with partner organizations is highlighted by the 2019 partnership with the IWIL Training Academy. The organization prepares and trains Democratic women to run for office, seek public appointments, and govern at all levels. The beginning of 2019 saw IDCCA co-sponsor with the IWIL Training Academy and Senator Dick Durbin a forum on Women in Elections: 2018–2020. Over 300 women attended to learn from expert panels and meet representatives from the IDCCA and sister organizations. Thank you IBEW Local 134 for providing the venue. Later in the year, IDCCA President Zahorik (McHenry) moderated the annual IWIL Training Academy Dawn Clark Netsch Policy Forum which focused on Voting Rights and Executive Director Dan Kovats provided valuable training on campaign field operations.

## IDCCA NEWSLETTER & WEBSITE

The IDCCA is committed to communicating with our membership. The IDCCA maintains a robust social media presence that includes Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and maintains a website. The IDCCA will continue to review and improve how we communicate. The website may provide the best way to transmit information and resources to our County Chairs and membership; thus the IDCCA made significant improvements in 2019.

IDCCA President Zahorik (McHenry) traveled the state talking with fellow Chairs and interested partners to learn about their needs. The website improvements are based on those conversations providing more useful content and additional resources. Content improvements include an upgraded calendar of events, a Leadership Circle page, and a dynamic webstore which hosts several different American made, union printed pieces of IDCCA merchandise. The designs are updated regularly. If you have an idea for a design let us know at [info@idcca.org](mailto:info@idcca.org). View items at <https://store.idcca.org/>. Resource improvements include a private login for County Chairs. This login provides access to salient information and resources like a speakers list, training videos, PC best practices, free County Party & candidate resources, union vendor list, and Illinois State Board of Elections forms. Website improvements will be ongoing. Thank you to Leadership Circle Members for their input and assistance.

## IDCCA RESOLUTIONS

With the unanimous support of the County Chairs, the IDCCA passed two resolutions in 2019:

Resolution1: (2019-001) The IDCCA is committed to purchasing American union made products. Resolution

2: (2019-002) The IDCCA endorsed the Fair Tax Amendment on the 2020 General Election ballot. Read them

at the IDCCA website <https://ildcca.org/about/resolutions/>

## DNC DELEGATE RECRUITMENT

The IDCCA assisted the Democratic Party of Illinois (DPI) with recruiting potential Presidential delegates in every congressional district. This was an important and large undertaking because of the unprecedented number of Presidential candidates. Each candidate needed to field delegates in every congressional district and be cognizant of the expanded participation parameters created by DPI. The IDCCA, with assistance from the 102 County Chairs, submitted over 800 Democratic applicants to DPI and to the Presidential campaigns for consideration. Thank you to our County Chairs for their help in this first step toward a Democratic President.





# PARTY BUILDING MEETINGS

IDCCA President Zahorik and/or staff met with County Chairs and County Parties from the following counties:



## STATEWIDE PARTY BUILDING

County Chairs, along with Precinct Committeepeople and their County Party membership, are volunteers tasked with an important, complicated job. The IDCCA is the partner organization providing the training, information, and resources to be successful.

The IDCCA President and staff had a robust 2019 travel schedule reaching more than half of Illinois' 102 counties. They traversed the state speaking at events, attending fundraisers, and meeting with 63 County Chairs and County Parties to discuss resources needed to build their organizations. County Chairs, Parties, and membership shared their best practices with the IDCCA. Additional details about these efforts can be found in the Annual Report under Party Building.

Although 2019 was an off cycle for election of County Chairs, there were 11 new County Chairs. The IDCCA welcomed the new Chairs and was available to assist them.

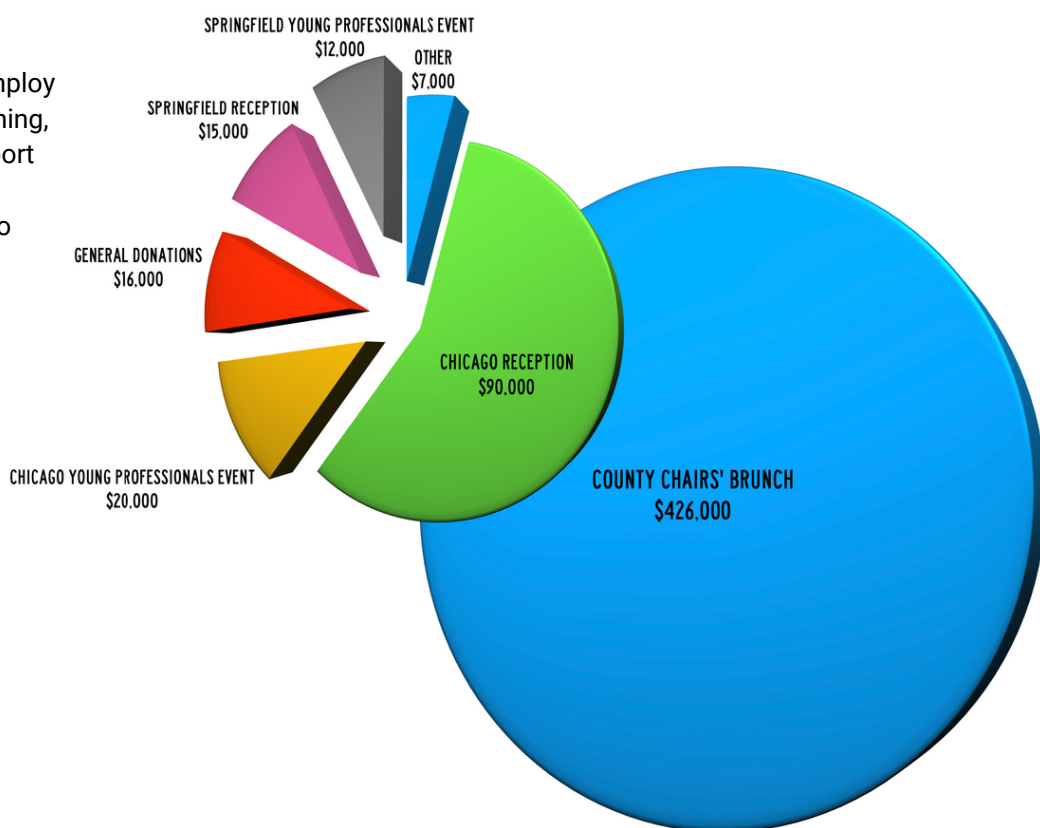


IDCCA 2019



# 2019 FUNDRAISING - \$586,000

The IDCCA raises funds from a variety of sources and events to maintain a Springfield office, employ staff & consultants, provide training, access to Votebuilder, and support to 102 counties, as well as candidates. Thank you to all who contributed.





# IDCCA LEADERSHIP CIRCLE 2019

Special thanks to the IDCCA Leadership Circle and Leadership Circle Chair **Kevin Conlon**. Leadership Circle Members serve as IDCCA ambassadors, expanding the IDCCA network and resources.

If interested in serving on the Leadership Circle, contact [dan@ildcca.org](mailto:dan@ildcca.org).

**Deborah Bandy, Director**  
Healthcare Policy & Advocacy

**Kam Buckner, State Representative**  
26th District

**Michael Carrigan, President**  
Illinois AFL – CIO

**Michael Cabonargi, Commissioner**  
Cook County Board of Review & State Central Committeeman

**Kevin Conlon, Chair of the IDCCA Leadership Circle, Founder & President Conlon & Dunn Public Strategies**

**John Dunn, Member**  
Cozen O’Conner Public Strategies

**Lauren Beth Gash, State Central Committeewoman**  
10th Congressional District

**Matt Glavin, Partner**  
Cozen O’Conner Public Strategies

**Monica Gordon, Executive Director**  
Illinois Legislative Black Caucus

**Randy Gori (in memoriam), Managing Partner**  
The Gori Law Firm

**Don Harmon, State Senator**  
39th District (Elected Senate President in January 2020)

**Bill Houlihan, State Central Committeeman**  
18th Congressional District

**Brianna Lantz, Government Relations Consultant**  
BLantz Consulting

**Lucy Moog, Ward Committeeperson**  
43rd Ward – City of Chicago

**Josina Morita, Commissioner**  
Metropolitan Water Reclamation District

**Olivia Pantoja, Consultant**  
The Consensus Group

**Bob Reiter, President**  
Chicago Federation of Labor

**Gillian Rosenberg Armour, Managing Director**  
Wildfire Contact

**Nancy Rotering, Mayor**  
City of Highland Park

**David Saunders, Partner**  
Jenner & Block

**Debra Shore, Commissioner**  
Metropolitan Water Reclamation District

**Ed Smith, President & CEO**  
Ullico, Inc.

**Ken Snyder, Founding Partner**  
Snyder Pickerill Media Group

**Heather Steans, State Senator**  
7th District

**Genevieve theirs, Co-Producer & Trainer RUN the Series**

**Jackie Traynere, County Board Member**  
Will County

**Anna Valencia, City Clerk**  
City of Chicago

**Gilbert Villegas, Alderman**  
36th Ward – City of Chicago

**Jen Walling, Executive Director**  
Illinois Environmental Council

**Kim Walz, Regional Director of Gov. Relations**  
Walgreens

**Mae Whiteside, President & CEO**  
CKL Engineers LLC

# 2019 IDCCA SPONSORS

Our generous sponsors fueled our work to build and support our County Parties, ensuring Every Democrat Everywhere, Counts! We look forward to working with you in 2020. To learn how you can join this illustrious group as an IDCCA sponsor, please contact [dan@ildcca.org](mailto:dan@ildcca.org).

## GOVERNOR'S CLUB (\$57,800)

Construction & General Laborers District Council of Chicago & Vicinity

## COUNTY CHAIRS' CLUB (\$15,000 - \$20,000)

Illinois Trial Lawyers Association

Law Office of Chris Doscotch

UFCW Local 881

## PLATINUM LEVEL SPONSOR (\$10,000 - \$14,999)

AFSCME Illinois Council 31

Chicago Regional Council of Carpenters

Gori Julian & Associates PC

Illinois AFL – CIO

Illinois Laborer's Legislative Committee

Illinois Pipe Trades

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## GOLD LEVEL SPONSOR (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

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Hon. Tammy Duckworth

McLean County Democratic Party

Hon. Dick Durbin

Midwest Region Laborer's Political League

Meg Herman

National Democratic Training Committee

Hon. Bill Houlihan

Peoria County Democratic Party

Hon. Toi Hutchinson

SEIU Healthcare Illinois Indiana

Illinois Democratic Women

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# 2019-2020 EXECUTIVE BOARD & LEADERSHIP TEAM

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## Leadership Team

**Dan Kovats**  
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