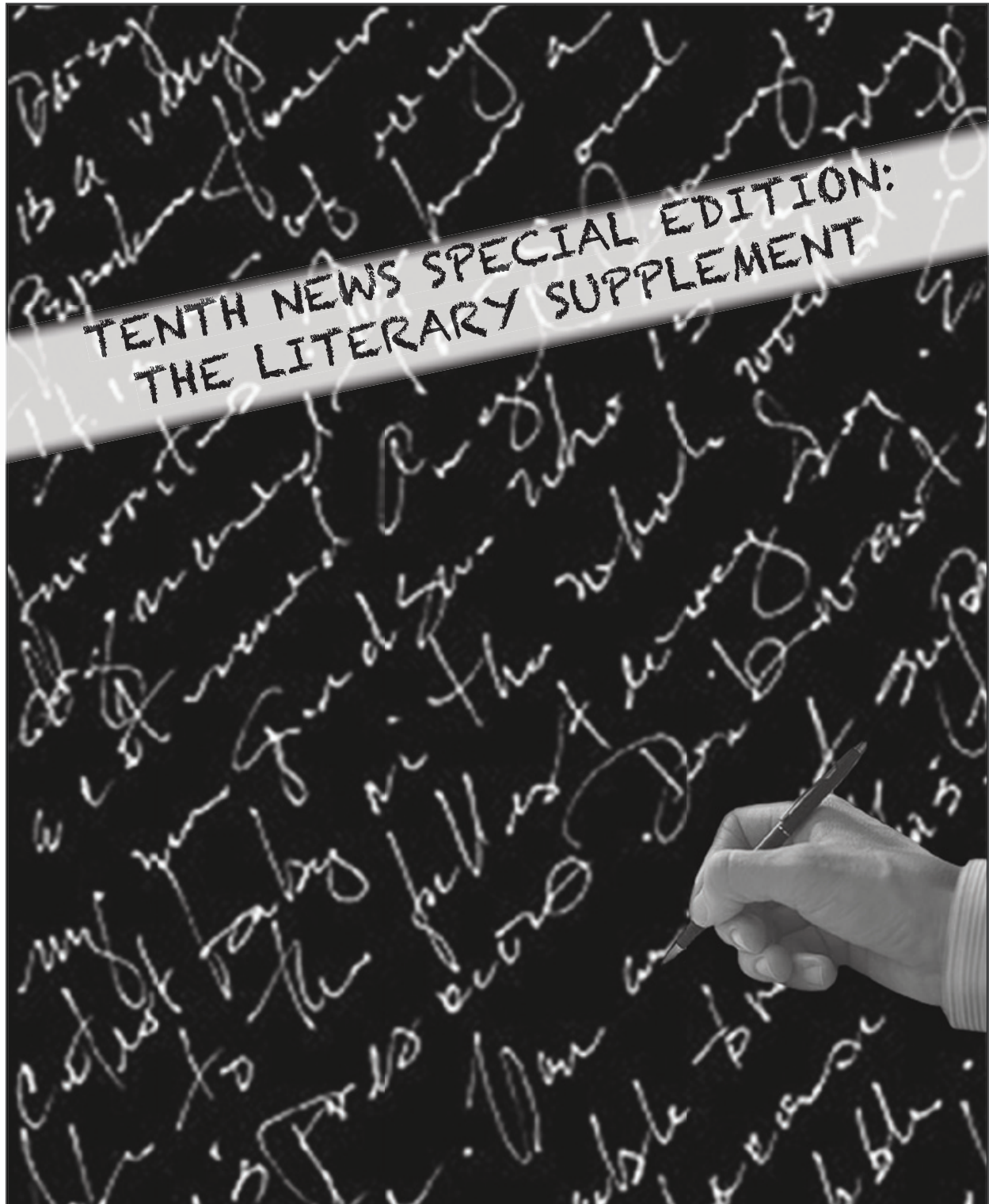




www.tenthdems.org

Tenth News

APRIL 2012 ILLINOIS TENTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT DEMOCRATS NEWSLETTER: SLAM EDITION



OUR 2011 POETRY + PROSE SLAM WINNERS

First Prize, Poetry

Crystal Hurtado, St. Martin de Porres HS,
“Love Those; Love With”

Second Prize, Poetry

Rachel Joyce Rodriguez, St. Martin de Porres HS,
“Struggles”

Third Prize, Poetry

Alberto Ulloa, Waukegan HS, “BLiND”

Honorable Mention, Poetry

Kiara Kilpatrick, North Chicago Community HS,
“Courage”

Honorable Mention, Poetry

Neschelle Sagun, Waukegan HS, “Different Views”

First Prize, Prose

Chanel Lewis, Waukegan HS, “Gwendolyn”

Second Prize, Prose

Ulises Acosta, St. Martin de Porres HS,
“The Junkie”

Third Prize, Prose

Rachel Joyce Rodriguez, St. Martin de Porres HS,
“What’s Expected”

Honorable Mention, Prose

Lamonte Brown, North Chicago Community HS,
“Carnations and Dandelions”

Honorable Mention, Prose

Jamie Turcios, Waukegan HS, “Unstoppable”





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Winners	2
Our First Slam.....	4
BLiND by Alberto Ulloa	5
Courage by Kiara Kilpatrick	6
Love Those; Love With by Crystal Hurtado	7
Struggles by Rachel Joyce Rodriguez	8
The Junkie by Ulises Acosta	9
What's Expected by Rachel Joyce Rodriguez	10
Slam Photos	11
Contributors.....	12
Acknowledgments.....	14
About Tenth Dems	16
About Community Connection	16

OUR FIRST ANNUAL POETRY (+ PROSE) SLAM

by Sharon Sanders

Wow! If ever there was an event that moved an audience to tears with pride and a feeling of community involvement, it was the Poetry (+ Prose) Slam that occurred on May 12, 2011, at Tenth Dems Community Connection Center in Waukegan. The event featured the prize-winners and honorable mentions in the Community Connection's inaugural student writing contest. The contest, which took place during spring of 2011, solicited poems and prose pieces from high school students attending Waukegan and North Chicago schools. The theme of the 2011 contest was "Connections."

I felt great pride in just being a small part of this event. I don't think we can adequately appreciate the devotion and time and effort that went into giving these teenagers a forum that allowed their writing (and speaking) talents to shine. These brilliant young students are all college material. Will they get the opportunity to go in that direction? It's going to be a long road, but they can do it. They should. Their work moved many to tears.

Our judges were local poets, Judith MK Tepfer and Jacqueline Harris. Harris' book, *Random Acts of Verse*, is now available at amazon.com. She read a powerful performance poem, which highlighted the disparity between the excessive attention given to Michael Jackson's death and the absence in the media of a story about a missing child. Tepfer, the editor-in-chief of the local journal of art and literature, *East on Central*, read her own poems on the subject of "Connections." And special thanks to contest organizer Elizabeth Bloom Albert's mother, Augusta G. Bloom, who shared an adorable, clever, and funny poem. She gave us a good laugh.

Finally, our slam emcee was Bill Wynn, a local jazz composer, performer, and poet, who made the kids feel very comfortable, laughed at his own mispronunciations of their names, and just seemed to have a strong sense of self. In fact, he sang his poem at the end of the evening, and it was simply beautiful.

So it was a great night—one to remember—and 2012's event will be even better. Thanks to all who did such a phenomenal job.

"BLIND"

To him it seemed so easy, just start talking and it'll come.

But what was unclear to him was, it had already begun.

He didn't see it, blinded by all the excitement and joy, that there was just no connection
between this father and little boy

How bad did he want it, he asked himself every day.

Was it worth sounding like a fool when he lost the words to say.

But why didn't he see this, was it the luxury and all, why didn't he see that
what really mattered was so tiny and so small.

Maybe he was denying it, maybe he just didn't see.

Maybe he didn't want to believe it and maybe that little boy, was, me.

Maybe I acted okay, that everything was just fine, and maybe
this unsupportive father was, all mine.

But I do have to thank him, if he would've never been this way, left me alone, a stray.

I would have not become independent and the man I am today.

Alberto Ulloa

"Courage"

They try to teach me
To stay in my boundary
I fight, and sigh
For I cry for being me
I am sorry for something I can't help

I have reached my tone of life
I am ready to soar the wind
I curse the day I stayed silent

Courage I say
For I have grown
No care to be the same
No care to stay silent
No care
For I have courage

I will not be that one
that one
who didn't speak
that one
who kept cold
that one
who was afraid to fall
that one
who is as unique as the rest

I am the one who
will one day stand tall
That one
who will fall and reach a better peak
That one who seeks to be born
a daredevil
Courage for now I have

Kiara Kilpatrick

"Love Those; Love With"

Love those who are weak
Love those who don't belong
When you love with intention
Your love is strong

Love those who act
By force or by choice
Love those who speak
By silence or by voice

Love with full feeling
And with a goal in mind
For empty love could leave one's soul
Recklessly behind

Behind in the time
Behind in the day
Behind in the moment
They watched you walk away

So love the angels
Love the troublemakers
For "love is fragile
And we are not it's best caretakers"

Love those who leave you
Love those who stay
Because one day they will all be gone
No matter how they may

Through physical suffering
Or pain in the mind
Those who fought great losses
Those who sought great finds

Come forward
Listen to me please
Love with passion
Love with ease

Listen closely and carefully
When you hear me say
Stand by them; forever stay
Never ever walk away

Crystal Hurtado

"Struggles"

If
there was a way to connect, would
You
want to?
Could
you handle it?
Only
for one day, only to
Understand
the everyday struggle, everyday joy of
My
life. The way I smile through the
Pain
of the darkness that remains....

Rachel Joyce Rodriguez

"The Junkie"

Watching the needle penetrate his skin and the fluid turn the syringe from half full to half empty, he felt his pain slip away; and almost instantly could feel everything. Not just his emotions but virtually everything. He could feel the texture of his rippled clothes, the fluff of his hair, the wide gaping holes in his shoes, the fuzz in his socks, the worn out bracelet chocking his wrist, his dirt stained fingers, and even his blood. Within his blood he could feel the warm substance mixing in with his blood cells and becoming very comfortable. He felt the parts of his body which were once very cold begin to feel warm. Warm and calm. He could feel a tingle in his arms and legs and he liked it. He liked the moment of ecstasy when he could feel nothing at all but still feel everything at once. He was aware of his surroundings more than ever now, and even became one with his environment. The floor which became his only home, the wall which had his back more than anything now, and the rocks which became his friends when he was alone. He sat in the alley hidden behind large buildings which covered up the ghetto where he lived in. To his left the corporate world, to his right the ghetto and all around him, the earth. The earth which he had left a long time ago; the earth he learned to ignore. Looking up at the dark night sky spotted with white stars that looked like a Vann Gough painting, he felt two large doors open in the back of his head. They slammed open and suddenly he felt the wind enter his empty skull and bounce around from wall to wall. As the stench of failure and years of disappointment emptied out, and fresh new smell of hope and jubilation took its place. He suddenly felt thrilled and something over came him and he jumped to his feet. Jumped, threw his hands in the air, and spun in a circle with a smile on his face. Laughter filled the area along with this new feeling. All at once, just as he had jumped up, he was back down. Lying on the floor and watching the blood from his forehead drip onto the rocky pavement, he slowly felt those familiar feelings. His high which in his mind lasted three minutes was brought back to a reality of three hours. And as he slowly crawled back to his first position when seated, he saw the empty syringe mocking him from across the floor. Reminding him of his failure and reminding him that the earth which brought him in was still here. As he sat with his head buried between his knees, he wept. He wept for what felt like three hours, but in reality was only three minutes; and as he wept a familiar stench returned to the area as a gush of wind like a tsunami blew the fresh smell away. The only thing left... was a worn out human being tired of life and all that inhabited it.

Ulises Acosta

"What's Expected"

She watches everybody pass her up in the fast lane, because to them life is just a game. But she's been through the pain and the shame, everybody spits that same lame game, nobody even bothers to ask her name. Abused, torn, tattered, broken glass shattered. Young black female living in the projects. Statistics set, easy expectations to be met. Lose your virginity before 13, be a mom by 16. They never expect more then what they see on their 60' flat screen TVs! That they watch in their expensive houses, while wearin' their expensive outfits. The perfect life. She lived it once, in a dream. Ideas flowing like a stream. Imma be; a model, an actress, a doctor, a teacher, a lawyer, the President! Imma rule the world! But everybody laughed and said: "Can't you see you'll never be! You will never make it out of: broken liquor bottles on the ground, hoes on the corner, condom wrappers on the ground, gunshots in your ear." Can't you hear her cries? Promises to hold her heart while holding her ass, never holds her hand. Young and naive she couldn't see the statistics being met. Gave up the goods at 13. Felt bad, couldn't tell her dad 'cus who the hell knew where he was. Mom's never home. So all alone she tried to make a change, better not only herself but her world. But she's just a confused and lonely little girl. Puff away the anger, drink away the pain. So the cycle continues. Only 14 thought it was another dream, but life is never as it seems. As her belly gets bigger she searches for the nigga, who could possibly be the father. But he don't want no more 'baby-mama-drama' already got 6 kids at 16. Don't you hear her scream? A child giving birth to a child, good girl gone wild. Little black girl from the ghetto with a dream. Shattered like broken glass in the street. Junior high she started getting high, confidence shot down like gunshots in the night. Never made it to high school, gotta baby to raise. So she carries the weight of generational curses like a coffin on her back. Living life dead because no one tells her it's ok to live. Abused. Torn. Tattered. Broken glass shattered. I wish it was only a dream.

Rachel Joyce Rodriguez



1. Left to Right: the Hon. Lauren Beth Gash, Ulises Acosta, Rachel Joyce Rodriguez, Crystal Hurtado, Alberto Ulloa, Chanel Lewis, contest organizer, Elizabeth Bloom Albert, and Slam Emcee, Bill Wynn. 2. Second-place Poetry winner, Rachel Joyce Rodriguez, of St. Martin de Porres HS reads her poem. 3. Laura Tomsky's daughter, Lauralyn, 9 years old, reads a poem she authored. 4. A peek at the audience. They are rapt. 5. Lamonte Brown, of North Chicago Community HS, reads his honorably mentioned story. 6. Abraham Jimenez, of Waukegan HS, reads his poem. 7. One of our judges, Jackie Harris reads from her newly published book of poetry. 8. Angelica England of Waukegan HS, reads. 9. Third-place Poetry winner, Alberto Ulloa, of Waukegan HS, reads his poem.



CONTRIBUTORS' NOTES



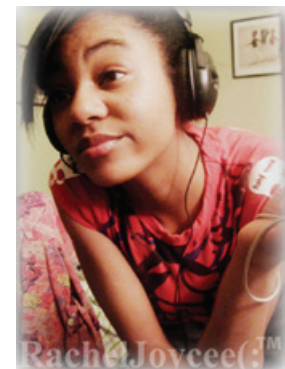
Born and raised in Waukegan IL, **Ulises Acosta** is a sophomore at St. Martin de Porres High School. He enjoys acting and singing and has been doing both since the age of three. He has been in movies, various plays, and has even done voice-overs for *National Geographic* cartoons. He began writing stories and poems in the 6th grade and hasn't stopped since. He hopes that after college he can begin to write, direct, and act in his own movies and plays. For more information you can search him on Google and imdb.com.

Crystal Hurtado is a deeply creative 16-year-old who attends Saint Martin de Porres High School. Her interests include poetry and fashion design. Her favorite classes at her high school are English and Theology. There are many things that inspire Crystal in her designs and poetry, such as her friends, nature, and inspirational quotes. Some of Crystal's favorite quotes are "Imagination is more important than knowledge; knowledge is limited, imagination encircles the world." –Albert Einstein, and "Be the change you want to see the world." –Gandhi. Although Crystal's main goal in life is to become a fashion designer, she promises that she will continue to write poetry in her spare time because she believes that there is no such thing as too much creativity.



Kiara Ariel Winfrey Kilpatrick is a 17-year-old who attends North Chicago Community High School. She enjoys being an inspiration to other young kids like her. She is in Navy Junior ROTC and commands two teams as an NJROTC Upperclassmen. She enjoys shopping, texting, eating, singing, dancing, writing movie scripts and plays, playing her guitars, and writing music. Her favorite thing to do in the whole world is to write what is in her mind. Her poetry is something she has been writing since she could talk. She has written over four hundred poems. Some call her a role model. Kiara just says "I am just being me."

Rachel Joyce Rodriguez is a junior at St. Martin de Porres High School. She is a Waukegan native who enjoys writing, dancing and modeling. Her many inspirations include her family, God, music and everyday life.





Alberto Ulloa (Berto) grew up in Waukegan Illinois just down the street from Clark Elementary school where he was a student. Berto graduated from Waukegan High School in 2011 and he plans to major in Business Management in college. He likes all types of sports such as soccer, baseball, football, and basketball. But the one sport that really gets him is skateboarding. Berto plans to start his own skateboarding company when he finishes college.

OUR JUDGES

Jacqueline Harris is a performance poet and author from North Chicago, IL. She is a 1995 graduate of North Chicago Community High School and a Shimer College alum. Her first book of poems, *Random Acts of Verse*, became available on amazon.com, summer of 2011. She is also a writer of short fiction.

Judith MK Tepfer was born at the age of 50, before which she had one middle initial and neither the ability nor the inclination to write creatively. Her late-in-life muse directed her to other writers and visual artists and the eventual founding of *East on Central*, a Journal of Arts and Letters from Highland Park, Illinois. Judith has been Editor-in-Chief of *East on Central* since its inception in 2002. She is also a freelance literary editor and writer, primarily of poetry.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Tenth Dems Community Connection writing contest, Poetry Slam, and this special edition of Tenth News could not have gotten off the ground without the help of dozens of individuals, whom I am going to attempt to name here.

In chronological order:

I would like to thank Lauren Beth Gash, Laura Tomsky, Ilya Sheyman, and the entire Community Connection Steering Committee for trusting me with the project. “Why don’t we have a writing contest for high school students?” I asked. “Let’s do it,” they said.

Since we were targeting students in the cities of Waukegan and North Chicago, we needed to work in cooperation with the administrators of the three high school districts. For this, I would like to thank David Brothman of North Chicago Community High School, David Bain and Kevin Kelleher of Waukegan High School, and Michael Odiotti of St. Martin de Porres School. In addition, we had teachers at each of the schools helping us to publicize the contest and collect contest entries. In particular, many thanks go to Karen Gordon (NCCHS), Mary Reynolds (SMDP), and Chuck Gutman (WHS), who were our teacher-contacts. Acting as liaisons to the schools were Community Connection Steering Committee members Ellen Kantor, David Bonner, and Ilya Sheyman.

Our beautiful, eye-catching posters for both the contest and the Slam were the work of Samantha Thomas. We are so lucky to have Samantha on our team.

When it came time to distribute the posters and handbills to schools, churches and businesses in downtown Waukegan, Charlene Miller, Angelica England, and Ilya Sheyman all played a part. Charlene, Angelica, and I went out on one very warm (hot) Sunday in March to leaflet cars parked in church parking lots. We also called pastors at the churches. I had help in that effort from Charlene Miller and Aryn Rose. And finally, since no publicity campaign in this day and age would be complete without an online component, I’d like to thank Paul Kelly and Terry Blaurock for their help with getting the contest and Slam announced on the Tenth Dems website and Events List.

Kimberly Rodriguez wrote superb, informative press releases for both the contest and the Slam, which helped us to publicize them in the local press.

Whenever we had proof-reading to be done, we knew we could turn to Adrienne Kirshbaum for expert assistance. Barbara Altman helped with Spanish translating and editing of all sorts.

When the contest entries came pouring in, Laura Tomsky kept entry forms and submissions organized. Laura pitched in in so many ways as we organized the contest, the Slam, and this special issue, it is hard to thank her enough.

Our two judges, Judith MK Tepfer and Jackie Harris cannot be thanked enough for the vital role they played. They were a joy to work with and I really appreciate the knowledge and sensitivity they brought to their tasks.

Vicki Bailyn shopped for the refreshments we served at the Slam. Ken Robinson of Baskin-Robbins donated ice cream cone certificates, which we were able to give to the students

who participated in the contest and the Slam. Phil Carrigan should also be thanked here for the role he played in securing the Baskin-Robbins certificates.

Our Emcee for the Slam was the delightful Bill Wynn. I met Bill for the first time on the evening of the Slam, and when he told me his motto, "You can't lose with Wynn," I knew we were in good hands. (And we were.)

Sharon Sanders wrote a glowing article for the Tenth News about the contest and Slam. I don't know if we deserved every ounce of the praise she bestowed, but all of us who put in hours of dedicated service to bring the project to fruition were pleased as punch to read her article.

Ravi Ganapathy took the stunning photos that appear on page 15 of this newsletter. And how could I fail to mention Terry Jones, who was an absolute joy to work with as we assembled this special issue of the *Tenth News*? She is the reason this issue looks as striking and polished as it does, and she never once scolded me for last minute edits.

And finally, I want to thank the students who participated in the contest and Slam. It was your fine work that made it all worthwhile.

Elizabeth Bloom Albert

At the Tenth Dems Annual Fundraiser and Awards Dinner, September 19, 2011



Top: Alberto Ulloa reads his poem.



Center: Left to right, Alberto Ulloa, Rachel Joyce Rodriguez, Kiara Kilpatrick.



Bottom: Kiara Kilpatrick reads her poem.

**TENTH DEMS COMMUNITY CONNECTION
118 NORTH GENESEE STREET
WAUKEGAN**

WRITING CONTEST "BELONGINGS"

High School Students

- Gurnee
- North Chicago
- Waukegan
- Zion

DEADLINE: Friday, April 20, 2012

PRIZES IN POETRY...

GRAND PRIZE \$200
1ST RUNNER-UP \$100
2ND RUNNER-UP \$50

PRIZES IN PROSE...

GRAND PRIZE \$200
1ST RUNNER-UP \$100
2ND RUNNER-UP \$50

Get an application at

tenthdems.org

ABOUT COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Bringing people together to make our community a better place to live.

Illinois Tenth Congressional District Democrats launched the Community Connection program in order to bring people together to make our community a better place to live. We opened our first Community Connection in the Waukegan/North Chicago area as a place for people in these communities to go when they have a problem, need advice, need a place to learn, to meet, to talk about community issues, and seek advice.

The Community Connection is looking for volunteers. Which of your skills are you willing to share with others? We need your talents and your desire to donate a couple of hours a week to work with people who share your dreams, who want to build better lives for themselves and for their families.

ABOUT TENTH DEMS

The Tenth Congressional District Democrats is a volunteer group that has formed to help elect Democrats at all levels of government within Illinois' Tenth Congressional District.

We seek to accomplish the following:

- Assist and support efforts to elect Democratic candidates at the local, state and national levels
- Coordinate campaign and other election efforts with other Democratic organizations
- Recruit and train new precinct committeemen/women
- Facilitate communication about events and news to the public and internally between campaigns, volunteers, precinct committeemen/women and Democratic organizations
- Inform citizens about the important issues facing district residents and all Americans
- Build an effective and responsive organization to facilitate these primary goals and objectives

Paid for by the Illinois Tenth Congressional District Democrats (www.tenthdems.org) and not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee. Contributions are not tax deductible. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year. Corporate contributions are not allowed.

Paid for by the Tenth Congressional District Democrats. A copy of our report filed with the State Board of Elections is (or will be) available for purchase from the State Board of Elections, Springfield, IL. Political contributions are not tax deductible.