

Election Results

BY PHIL BEDER
DIA MEMBER



DIA held its annual election on Sunday Nov. 18.

Veteran “At Large” board members returning to their positions include Jim Davis, Marla DeFex, Luda Demikhovskaya, Robert Hardy, Danny Porro, Tom Powers, Bob Schoenfeld, Paula Wolff and Julia Yepez-Macbeth. There are two new faces on the board this year.

Robert Acevedo joined DIA last year and has taken an active role attending court hearings on MTA accessibility. He is also becoming a leader in the organization’s advocacy on universal health care.

Milagros Franco is the other new board member. Milagros has been the Intake & Housing Specialist at the Brooklyn Center for the Independence of the Disabled (BCID) for the past 11 years. She is also a long time member of DIA and has already started working with the incoming Corresponding Secretary on administrative matters. She is sure to be an energetic voice in the organization.

There will be a mixture of new and experienced people in the officer ranks this year. Jean Ryan, who filled a vacancy in the presidency in the middle of last year was elected to that position for 2019. Jean has been the Second Vice President for many years and wants to bring a renewed energy to the activist endeavors of DIA. She has already instituted new practices at monthly meetings that have created a more collegial atmosphere where issues are brought up and discussed cooperatively.

Carr Massi is a past president of DIA and has assumed the position of First Vice President. DIA’s First Vice President is in charge of legislative affairs. Carr has expressed an interest in mentoring new and younger members and intends to use her long and extensive experience to help develop the next generation of advocates.

Michael Acevedo is new to DIA and is jumping in as Second Vice President. Michael and his partner Robert joined DIA in the Fall of 2018 and are excited by what they see as a new energy in DIA. Robert and Michael have attended meetings occasionally in the past but are now investing their time and efforts because they see an organization that is focused and committed.

Valerie Joseph will be DIA’s new Recording Secretary. Valerie is a multi-talented person with skills in writing and technology. She is the Access-A-Ride Advocate at BCID.

The position of Corresponding Secretary has been vacant for quite a few years. But this year Philip Bennett will be adding his writing skills to his activism to serve DIA in this position. Philip has agreed to work closely with Treasurer Phil Beder on reorganizing DIA’s record keeping system. Hopefully, Valerie Joseph, Philip Bennett and I will be able to create a highly functional electronic office that is designed for the 21st century. 2019 promises to bring many improvements to DIA.

Our meetings will continue to change and improve. The leadership is committed to developing policies and procedures to improve our management and the board will be conducting training sessions to better fulfill their role as the stewards of Disabled In Action. We will celebrate our 50th year in 2020 with a renewed and effective voice for disability rights.