

## **ILC Candidate Speeches As Heard at the 5/24 General Meeting**

### **Pam Hett President**

Hello, I am Pam Hett and I am ILC's current Group Leader/President and am running for the office of President for a 2 year term.

I could list all the events and accomplishments that have happened since I became ILC Group Leader in March 2025, but most of you in this room have been part of many of those events, so don't need to rehash that.

What I want to focus on are the relationships that have been built over the last year and a few months and how that has positively shaped ILC and where I feel ILC can become in the next 2 years.

First I want to thank all current and past Steering Committee members. Some I knew from years back, some I just met when I got involved with ILC. We have an amazing team. Sometimes it feels like herding cats, but we have accomplished so much and have a lot of plans for the future which I am proud to be a part of.

Indivisible National - I had the opportunity to go to Washington DC last June for Indivisifest, a gathering of group leaders from around the US. It solidified my feeling that Indivisible was the right group to get involved with and I could 100% support their mission. Also got to meet personally with Leah and Ezra, the co-founders of Indivisible. Indivisible gives us a lot of backend support, from No Kings media and security training, to our ActBlue accounts to Grow Grants and grants for our anniversary party. As group leader, I get to work behind the scenes to bring you all the benefits of being part of Indivisible National.

Indivisible New Mexico State Committee - I am on the Indivisible NM State Committee and that affords us visibility as a major Indivisible group in the State, not just an after thought in the south. Statewide political candidates I met when in ABQ, I have been able to tell them all the fantastic things we are doing in Las Cruces and they want to come down and talk with you. I get to work behind the scenes to bring you all the benefits of being part of the statewide Indivisible committee.

Indivisible The 915, Indivisible Silver City, Indivisible TorC, over the last year built relationships with each of these groups to build our Immigration Group and started a statewide Immigration Signal chat that has worked to pass positive immigration legislation during this last session and has supported vigils and rallies in Las Cruces and Santa Teresa. Started an Indivisible statewide healthcare Signal chat that had a very positive impact on healthcare legislation in the last session. I get to work behind the scenes to bring you all the benefits of being in coalition with other Indivisible groups in our region.

BlueCD2 - Relationships I have made with BlueCD2 have allowed us to expand our postcard reach and introduced us to texting opportunities to get voters to vote in the primary and upcoming general elections. I get to work behind the scenes to bring you all the benefits of being in partnership with BlueCD2.

Intergenerational relationships - Bringing in a younger active group of progressives all started when Jonathon Delgado reached out to me and said I think Indivisible Las Cruces could be a very positive force in the progressive community. Jon and I met a few times and talked about building community with the younger progressives in the area. That was at the time Project Jupiter bond initiative was being voted on by the County. And there was a time we had a pretty intense discussion here after one of the meetings, but it was healthy and it reinforced the importance of building trust when building coalition between intergenerational groups. I hope I have earned your trust.

Then there are the relationships built by answering ILC emails, preparing SC meeting agendas, general meeting agendas, coordinating education nights, candidate nights, and bi-weekly speakers. I get to work behind the scenes to bring you all the benefits of all the progressive knowledge, activities and causes we can support and make a change in Las Cruces and Dona Ana County.

Where are all these relationships going to take ILC in the future?

1. Continue to increase ILC's awareness in the community.
2. Continue to work hard to elect progressive candidates at all levels of government.
3. Make our voices heard on key issues like immigration, healthcare, data centers, environmental damage to this ancestral land. As John Lewis said we need to make "Some Good Trouble"
4. Reach out to communities in southern Dona Ana county, get out the vote, become involved.
5. Expand our Spanish language reach

I believe Indivisible Las Cruces must continue building a broad, welcoming coalition that defends democracy, supports working families, engages younger generations, and creates meaningful opportunities for civic action. All while maintaining the positive, inclusive, and grassroots spirit that has made Indivisible Las Cruces successful. I may not be here to attend all the meetings, rallies and events, but I work very hard behind the scenes to make Indivisible Las Cruces an amazing organization. Thank you!

## **Alice Benjamin**

### **Member at Large**

Hello everyone!

I know that most of you already know me, but as I am running to continue as one of the Members At Large on our Indivisible Steering Committee, I'd like to tell you a little bit about me.

My name is Alice Benjamin and I was born and raised in Manhattan, New York City.

For most of my adult life in NYC, I worked in the Graduate School of Social Services at Fordham University (also in their Law School). During much of that time (late 80's/early 90's), AIDS was a rampant issue, and I helped start the AIDS Awareness Group/Task Force at Fordham.

During this time period I marched in many AIDS Walks, as well as volunteered with God's Love We Deliver which was an organization that delivered food to homebound AIDS patients, and with New York Cares.

Growing up in NY I had heard “his” family name throughout my life and it was always in a derogatory way (I don’t say nor spell his name).

In my final years in New York City, I worked for one of the other major real estate companies in Manhattan, and boy did I get an earful when I worked there!

When he ran originally, due to personal reasons I couldn’t step up, but who really thought he’d really get elected!!!

This time around, I was READY, WILLING, and ABLE!!!

I did some research, and was so pleased to find that there was a reactivated local Indivisible chapter in town and here we are today!

I’ll touch on some of my responsibilities here at Indivisible Las Cruces:

- I am a Member At Large on the Steering Committee
- Meet ‘N Greet Squad Leader
- Volunteer Coordinator
- I hold and keep track of the quantities of material that are set up at our general meetings and other functions
- I greet and interact with new members at our general meetings and other functions
- I collect and tally money donated at our meetings and functions
- I open first Christian Church before meetings, and I close up and shut down after our functions
- I open up and close down first Christian Church, when we hold Banners, Posters, and Postcards. I also greet and sign in attendees. While there, I help set up and break down the art supplies and tables.
- I open up and close down when we have Education nights/Panels
- I also try to fill in as needed at our other functions

If you have any other questions for me, I’ll be around after the meeting.

I have been honored to work over this past year with the wonderful people on the Indivisible Steering Committee, and been able to meet so many of you as we face this fight.

Please vote for me to continue as one of Indivisible Las Cruces’ Members At Large!

Thank you!

## **Jim Hoerst**

### **Member at Large**

Here’s why you should vote for me. I have four reasons.

1. I am an activist. I’m active in the Federation of Democratic Women, the Progressive Voter Alliance, and other groups. For the last three years, I have devoted myself to many progressive causes, including increasing vote-by-mail participation and pro-choice advocacy. My primary focus has been on the

Separation of Church and State. I have had lots of help from a group that calls itself the Las Cruces Nones. We got the Dona Ana County Commission to stop the opening prayer at their meetings and to stop issuing religious proclamations. For the last two years, we have prevented Las Cruces from hosting National Day of Prayer ceremonies at city hall.

I have encouraged others to become activists by recruiting them to participate in my activities. If you want a politically active group, then you want political activist leadership.

2. Through my political activism, I have formed a political network that includes most of the City and County elected officials. I know most of them, and more importantly, they know me. One of the things that I hope to do as a member of the Steering Committee is to increase our support and influence on local elected officials who are sympathetic to our cause. I have devoted lots of time and energy to building my political network, and I think it would be an asset to our organization.

3. One of my goals is to improve our outreach to our community. One thing we can do to foster that is to welcome diversity of thought. We don't all agree on everything, and that's okay. We all agree that Trump needs to be stopped. We all agree that the USA needs to go in a more progressive direction. We can unify around that.

4. One issue I have with our current steering committee is our Facebook policies. In my opinion, they do not reflect Indivisible's values. I find the current rules suppressive. We should be allowed to talk frankly about sensitive topics, including religion. Our administrators seem to think there should be special rules for talking about religious topics. I foresee religion as a major topic in the next presidential election. Our dialogue on the subject will be instrumental in forming our response to religious issues. I maintain that we should be allowed to talk about religious topics in the same way we can about other topics. A progressive organization should not have any suppressive policies.

Whatever our rules are, they should be approved by the membership.

And here's another reason why you should vote for me. I want the job. I think I offer a lot of creativity and energy. I think it's good to shake things up a little bit, and our board could benefit from some new blood. Thank You. Any questions?