

## New York City Campaign Finance Board

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### FULL DISCLOSURE

April 2009, No. 8

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## The Site to See

The New York City Campaign Finance Board serves the public interest by enhancing the role of New York City residents in the electoral process. One of the ways that CFB achieves this goal is by providing information through its website, [www.nycffb.info](http://www.nycffb.info). Home to a multitude of useful information, the site is divided into three categories accessible across the top of each page to allow for easy navigation depending on your interests—**Candidates**, **Press**, and **Public**. Each section has an expandable information key on the left side of the page, allowing viewers to reach the particular information they seek quickly and easily.

The **Candidates** section is the first stop for anyone considering a run for public office. The **I'm Thinking about Running** sub-section gives potential candidates the details on how to begin a campaign. Here, new candidates can find the forms necessary to open a campaign committee and register with the CFB. **I'm a Candidate** provides campaigns with the information and guidance they need to comply with city campaign laws and regulations. Of particular importance to candidates is the 2009 Campaign Finance Handbook, a

reference guide and a user manual for candidates running for office across the city. Information and schedules for CFB compliance seminars and C-SMART software trainings—required for Program participants—are available in both subsections. Additional subsections provide information about the Campaign Finance Act, actions taken by the CFB, and a link to information about the New York City Voter Guide.

The **Press** section has a variety of detailed public information about campaigns and the CFB. **Campaign Finance Information** provides links to the searchable database of financial information filed by campaigns, candidate finance summaries, and other information about candidate finances and campaigns. There are links to details about New York City's Debate Program. **Information about the CFB** is filled with details about the CFB's mission, its staff, and a schedule of important events. **News & Publications** contains a wide variety of material published by the Board, including editions

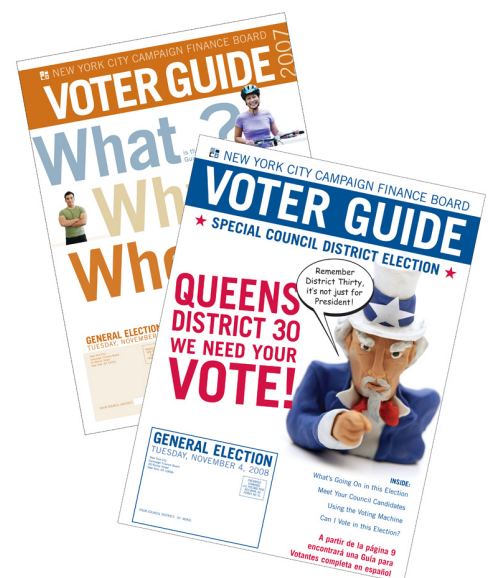
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## Getting Your Message Out: The New York City Voter Guide

As a candidate for local office in New York City, public funds provided through the Campaign Finance Program can help publicize your candidacy. But the demands of a city campaign are many. Are you getting your message out? Do your potential voters know your platform? Do they even know you are running?

Every candidate, whether they are running their campaign from the kitchen table or a well-appointed office with staff and funding to spare, worries about getting his or her message to potential voters.

In New York City, however, candidates know the voters will read about their campaign platform in the city's official Voter Guide, published by the CFB and mailed to every household with an eligible voter before the primary and general election. This amounted to more than 2.7 million primary guides and 3.6 million general election guides for the 2005 elections.



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## The Site to See *(from page 1)*

of this newsletter, post-election reports, research papers on campaign finance issues, and press releases. In the **Enforcement Information** section, users can access Final Audit Reports that review candidates' compliance with the Program's rules, as well as lists of candidates with outstanding penalties or repayments of public funds, and candidates with late or missing disclosure statements.

In the **Public** section, the website achieves one of its most important tasks—providing information to help voters make informed decisions on Election Day. On the left side of the page, there are four categories. The first, the **Voter Guide**, will link to the online Voter Guide for the 2009 fall election. (See accompanying article.) Users can view Guides from previous elections, and learn more about the information provided in the Guide. Next, the **Debates** page provides information and background about the CFB's Debate Program. **Public Disclosure & Other Resources** provides a comprehensive set of links to information about campaign finances and the CFB. This exchange of knowledge helps members of the public become more informed voters.

Some information is relevant to all users, and will be found in more than one place on the website. In each section, a subsection called

**Campaign Finance Law** provides links to the Campaign Finance Act and Board rules, as well as advisory opinions and requests.

Users can access the searchable database of campaign finance information from anywhere on the site. In the next few weeks, the CFB plans to introduce a newly redesigned interface for the searchable database. The current interface was first introduced to users in 1997. The new, more user-friendly interface will allow users to access the information they seek more quickly, and perform more powerful searches than before.

The New York City Campaign Finance Board's website helps provide transparency to the political process. By providing information to campaigns, it aims to make running for office an attainable goal for anyone interested in representing their community. By providing public access to campaign finance data disclosed by campaigns, the site is a valuable resource for the media and any citizen interested in following city elections.

Both directly and indirectly, the information provided through the CFB website helps cultivate informed voters. Part of the CFB's mission is to enhance the role of New York City residents in the electoral process, and [www.nycffb.info](http://www.nycffb.info) is an integral part of achieving that goal.

The 2009 Certification form is now available on the [CFB's website](#)! If you plan to join the Campaign Finance Program and hope to be eligible for public matching funds, you must complete and submit your Certification on or before **June 10, 2009**. You must submit the Certification form even if you have already submitted a Filer Registration. **Late Certifications will not be accepted!**

## Graphically Speaking With Winnie Ng



Winnie Ng

If you visit the CFB website, read the Voter Guide that's delivered to your home near election time, or even read this newsletter, you have seen the work of Winnie Ng. As Art Director in the CFB's Communications Unit, Winnie creates and formats CFB publications so they are attractive, clear, and easy-to-read. Winnie's responsibilities extend from the printed page to the screen—her portfolio encompasses “all things graphic-related” at the CFB.

As winter turns to spring and this year's elections grow nearer, Winnie is working hard along with the Communications Unit to design and produce the full range of materials that will provide candidates and voters with the right information for the upcoming campaign season. Winnie has just put the finishing touches on the 2009 Candidate Handbook.

She designed the user interface for the C-SMART software that is used by all campaigns, as well as the entryway to the C-Access portal website.

A Brooklyn native, Winnie graduated from F.I.T. with a degree in Illustration, and took a part-time job as a graphic designer. Her search for full-time employment in the field led her to the Campaign Finance Board.

She's always been a fan of extreme sports like snowboarding and mountain biking, but now that Winnie is mom to a 19-month old toddler, she has turned her attention to quieter activities, like reading and drawing. With her daughter getting older, Winnie hopes to “resume my oil painting.”

After almost ten years at the CFB, the thing she likes best about working here is the people. “I feel very fortunate to be surrounded by such intelligent, hard-working colleagues,” Winnie says. “What's better than working with friends?”

## RECENT BOARD ACTIONS

- Penalties of \$8,505 were assessed against the 2005 City Council campaign of Albert Baldeo. The Board dismissed two complaints filed against Mr. Baldeo during the 2005 election.
- The Board issued an advisory opinion to address the general requirements for the April 21 special election for Bronx borough president.
- The Board determined not to invalidate matching claims reported in disclosure statement #6 by 2009 Council candidates Thomas E. Cooke (District 19) and Peter J. Gleason (District 1), although they were filed late.

### NYC Voter Guide *(from page 1)*

The Voter Guide is the cornerstone of the CFB's comprehensive voter education program. It covers elections for mayor, public advocate, comptroller, borough president, and City Council, as well as ballot initiatives. Since 1989, the CFB has produced and mailed the nonpartisan Guide to registered voters in the five boroughs before each local primary and general election, using voter registration data obtained from the City Board of Elections. Colorful, oversize Guides in targeted editions are mailed only to eligible voters, eliminating waste. Voters' council, assembly, and election district numbers are printed on the mailing label to help them find the correct voting machine at the polls. The Guide is published in English and Spanish, and in Chinese and Korean in certain districts consistent with the federal Voting Rights Act.

Each candidate for local office has the opportunity, free of charge, to submit a profile: biographical information and answers to questions about their platforms, along with a photo. No matter which office a candidate seeks, or how much money that candidate has raised, all candidates in the Guide are on an equal footing, receiving the same amount of space in the Guide.

In May of the election year, the CFB sends Voter Guide submission kits to candidates, containing the CFB's **Voter Guide Wizard** software, which helps candidates create and submit their profiles. Candidate profiles for all candidates, whether or not they are in the primary, must be submitted by **June 10, 2009** (the same day Certification forms to join the Campaign Finance Program are due).

The CFB will publish profiles from candidates who, at press time, are on the ballot for the covered election. Candidates who are still considering a run for office should submit a profile just in case, since profiles received late may not appear in the Guide.

For the increasing number of voters seeking voting information online, the CFB posts an interactive Voter Guide on its website at [www.nycffb.info/VoterGuide](http://www.nycffb.info/VoterGuide). Voters can enter their address to view a Guide tailored to their home district, or simply browse candidate profiles by name or office. Links allow visitors to email campaigns, visit candidate websites, look up their polling place, download a voter registration form, and much more. Over 200,000 visitors took advantage of this instant

access to election information before the 2005 primary and general elections, and that number is expected to grow in 2009.

New York City voters seem to appreciate the Guide. According to a post-election poll conducted on behalf of the CFB, the last citywide Voter Guide had a 91% positive rating—an approval rating any candidate would appreciate. 86% of readers confirmed that it was useful in helping them make more informed decisions.

If you are a candidate, don't miss your opportunity to submit a profile and get your message to voters without spending a dime. If you are a voter, be sure to look for the Guide in your mailbox in the fall and get yourself educated about the 2009 elections!

#### Inside the Guide

- Profiles submitted by candidates running in each race, including their photos, bios, and answers to questions about issues affecting their district and the city.
- Comprehensive ballot initiative coverage, including plain-language descriptions of each proposal, reasons to vote yes or no, and excerpts of "pro" and "con" statements submitted to the CFB by supporters and opponents.
- A list of voters' rights and contact information for all Board of Elections offices.
- Answers to common questions about how, where, and when to vote.
- An illustrated guide to using the voting machines.
- Other resources for voters, including how to access the state's online judicial voter guide and the video voter guide produced by the Voter Assistance Commission.

**“TIP OF THE MONTH”**  
**from CFB Candidate Services**

### *Contribution Cards*

Contribution cards allow the CFB to ensure that contributions received by the campaign are eligible to be matched. Your campaign is required to return a completed contribution card with every cash or money order contribution. It is recommended you collect them for contributions made by check as well, to capture required contributor’s employment information.

#### **Sample**

It is recommended you use the CFB’s sample [contribution card](#), which you can customize with your committee’s information. If you plan on printing your own personalized contribution card, please ensure that it uses all of the same language, and requests all of the same information. You may find it helpful to send your personalized contribution card to your Candidate Services liaison before you begin accepting contributions.

Contributions with incorrect, incomplete, or altered contribution cards attached may not be valid for match. Invalid contributions also are not counted toward your campaign’s threshold for receiving public funds.

#### **Matching Claims**

Below are some common omissions that can lead to invalid matching claims:

- **Committee Name:** Make sure your committee name, as registered with the CFB, is clearly listed at the top of your contribution card.
- **Missing Contribution Type Box:** You must have indicator check-boxes to show how the contribution was made. Please review our sample [contribution card](#) to see where contributors should indicate their contribution method: cash, check, money order, or credit card. This is important because contributors may give multiple times and this information helps link a contribution to the required documentation.
- **Affirmation Statement:** Every contributor must affirm that his/her contribution was made legally. Your contribution card must contain the correct affirmation statement. If you plan on designing a personalized card, you should copy the statement from the CFB’s sample contribution card. Never rewrite or add extra language to the affirmation statement. Be sure the signature and date lines are directly below the affirmation statement to clearly demonstrate that the contributor affirms to the legal requirements. Please note that there are different affirmation statements for [cash/money order](#) contributions, [credit card](#) contributions, and a [combined](#) affirmation for both.

If a contributor fails to fully or accurately complete a card, the contribution may not be matched or be counted toward your campaign’s threshold. If you receive an incomplete contribution card, do not write over it, fill it in, or correct it. Instead, call your liaison for guidance.

Please keep in mind when collecting contribution cards:

- To avoid potential questions about the card’s authenticity, each contributor must complete the contribution card *at the same time* the contribution is made.
- The person making the contribution **must** be the person who signs the contribution card.

#### **Help**

The Candidate Services Unit can be reached at (212) 306-7100.