

Christopher Kent likes Michael Acanfora's post.

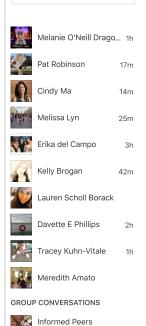


Crystal Layne Sanders shared a link.



Kristy Lochmann Austin commented on her own

Show Older



Jennifer Chuang for Assembly Speech Moorestown Community House April 4, 2017

DR. JENNIFER CHUANG FOR NEW JERSEY STATE ASSEMBLY 7TH DISTRICT · TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2017

Hello. My name is Jennifer Chuang, and I am a Moorestown resident and graduate of Moorestown High School, a pediatrician, and my most important job: I am a mom. And because I am concerned about the future for our children, last week I officially entered my petition to run for NJ State Assembly for the 2017 election.

Why have I decided to enter this race? As a physician that has studied medicine for her entire life and now practices in an academic setting teaching others about the art of medicine, the increasing skepticism regarding sound science is very troubling to me. Decisions regarding scientific research, public health, and protecting our Earth should not be political issues, yet somehow, in today's society they are. I fear that the people, most of all children and future generations, will suffer because of decisions that are being made right now by our current lawmakers in government on a national level and on a state level. Though politics is not the trajectory I had foreseen for myself, I do feel that it is of utmost importance to have a pediatrician in the NJ State legislature.

So tonight I hope to tell you all a bit about me. Maybe by the end of the night you'll know a little bit more about myself, but most of all, I hope that you learn more about the community that we live in.

I was born and raised here in Moorestown. My parents, Tsin and Janice, moved to the United States from Taiwan in the 1960's to study higher education and eventually settled in Moorestown where my father had his dental practice on Main St. next to Wawa. I attended Moorestown Township Public Schools and I am so honored to see so many of my former teachers that have taught me and my husband in this room tonight. I have never been able to express in words the gratitude that I owe you, but I will try tonight. From Mrs. Pascal, I learned that mixing sulfuric acid with sugar is a memorable exothermic reaction experiment, and that science is always awe-inspiring and fun. I knew that Mrs. Vose was invested in every student she ever had, and she always cared about the well-being of her students in Spanish class. She worked us hard, but we had a lot of fun in the process. I still hum myself the Preterite and imperfect conjugation song in my head now and then. I was honored to have you both present for our wedding 13 years ago. Mr. Rhody, you opened my eyes and interest to the world of history, and by having us read the Latin texts, you taught me early on how important it is to look at primary sources, a lesson that is still important to me today. I wish I could call out each teacher and the life lessons that I have learned, but I could go on for hours. Most of all, my teachers instilled in me a desire for life-long learning, for the desire for knowledge continues long after the tests are graded and the diplomas are received. But there was one day in our 10th grade English class with Ms. Bond where the class came to a halt. She told us of the turmoil in the nation she had witnessed while growing up which culminated in the Kent State shootings. She looked out at our classroom, 15 year old students in the class of 1995, and she said that she saw hope in the people in that room, that we were



Home 20+

most of all, I have seen them grow into decent, kind, generous, and compassionate people.

I am a product of the New Jersey public education system. I have many fond memories of growing up in our school system and learned valuable life lessons, none of which can be quantified by standardized testing. A child's worth and a teacher's value as an educator should not be based on the student's performance on the PARCC testing, and it most certainly should not be a graduation requirement in the state of NJ.

The reality is that quality education comes at a price, and NJ has fairly high state taxes and property taxes in order to fund its schools. Much debate has been occurring on a state leadership and national level about how to support our schools. But I would argue that we are talking about the most important investment, and that is of the education of our children. Our kids are going to be our future leaders. Do we want them to be good test takers, or do we want them to be generous, compassionate, and to lead with integrity? So our schools continue to need our funding, and I would support fully funding the 2008 School Funding Reform Act to ensure that school districts across the state have the resources needed to invest in our children.

I have had the opportunity over the last couple weeks to meet with teachers throughout the district, new, seasoned, and retired. I learned that over the last 20 years there have been many revisions to the Teacher's Pension Fund. While a teacher would never become rich from dedicating their lives to public service, they should not have to worry that they would not be able to get by with the current direction the pension is going. So if I were to be in the NJ State Assembly, I would support measures to have the State resume payments into the Teacher's Pension Fund.

New Jersey education, both public and private, is a leader throughout the nation. We are the most densely populated state in the union, thus our education system is grooming a large number of future leaders for the rest of the United States. We must value our teachers and ensure that it remains the esteemed profession that it is. It is essential for each future generation that the best and brightest of the class to continue to want to go into the field of teaching. If we lose that then our nation will stagnate.

Five years ago I returned to Moorestown so that my husband, Lakshman, and I could be close to our parents and send our 2 children (Jacob who is 6 and Kiran who is now 2) to quality schools. And like most people I know, family is the most important part of my life. Some of you have also gone to school or in some cases taught my sister, Cynthia Chuang, who is also here with us this evening. And 11 years ago, my sister and her husband, then parents to 2 very young children, were given the news that no parent ever wants to hear: "your child has cancer." At 3 years old, Emma had a very aggressive childhood cancer called neuroblastoma. She fought and fought and fought. It was amazing to me to see the level of toughness that a 3 year old could have. She had 9 rounds of chemotherapy, a major abdominal surgery, a stemcell transplant replacing all of her bone marrow, and several treatments of radiation therapy. Even with these aggressive treatments, the chances of surviving from the cancer were not high. A new research therapy was introduced, a novel immunotherapy. And thanks to advances in medical research, most of which were funded by NIH grants, Emma will soon be turning 14 years old, and 10 years cancer free.

And so my entry into this election race is not just for professional reasons, but it is personal. The leadership in our national government is growing increasingly skeptical of the value of



Dawn Hotz Toye commented on Sarah Myriam's post.



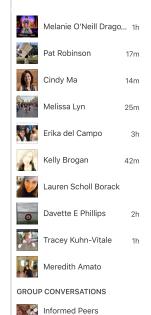
Christopher Kent likes Michael Acanfora's post.



Crystal Layne Sanders shared a link.



Kristy Lochmann Austin commented on her own post.





Louise Home 20+

budget by 18%. And why does this matter? As an adolescent medicine physician who currently practices in a large academic institution, I can tell you that the implications of NIH funding cuts are profound. NIH grants are the gold standard of academic researchers. They are difficult to be awarded, and only those researchers who have shown experience, integrity, and promise in advancing the field score these highly sought after grants. Several philanthropy groups help to fund research as does private industry. But these government grants by the NIH are considered the purest grants without bias or other strings attached. And without those NIH grants, scientific research will suffer. In the case of my family fighting childhood cancer, experimental trials will come to a halt, and the cure for cancer may come too late for another child.

and speaking up is that fives are at stake. The national government plans to cut the infi

And while Emma was being treated for cancer, her immune system was gravely weakened and she could not receive certain vaccinations. If she were exposed to something as seemingly common place as chicken pox, I don't want to think about what the outcome would have been. And there are other children that for medical reasons cannot receive certain vaccinations, and they require the herd immunity of all of the rest of us being vaccinated to protect them from vaccine preventable illnesses such as measles. However, there has been a growing fear about vaccinations, and we must ask ourselves why? Each parent only want what is best for their children. And as a parent, it is certainly difficult to see your child getting multiple needles at several points throughout childhood, especially during the early years. But these vaccines are paramount to prevent devastating infectious diseases. A frequently cited concern by parents has been media reports that certain vaccinations may cause autism. Despite me saying over and over again to parents that the scientific research does not support this concern, I can see that the fear remains for some parents. And they are right to worry that we do not have enough information about autism in general. We need to continue to pursue research in the origins, diagnosis, and treatment of autism for these children. We need to support them as they grow up into adults and their aging parents agonize over who will care for their autistic adult children when they are no longer able to. However, we do know that vaccinations have no association with autism. Vaccinations are safe and they are necessary. And when I saw that bills have been increasingly introduced to the NJ State legislature regarding having vaccines become more and more voluntary in nature, I was no longer able to rest. This brings a rise out of pediatricians everywhere, and it should bring a rise out of parents, teachers, and healthcare providers. Vaccinations are the main reason why I, as a pediatrician, felt that it was essential to enter this NJ State Assembly race at this particular time. New Jersey already allows religious exemption to vaccination, and in 2015-2016, 9506 children were not vaccinated due to religious exemption. If our state and national government leadership pass laws that continue to loosen vaccination requirements, then lives will be lost, and I cannot sit by and allow that to happen. I'm a pediatrician, and we fight for our patients' lives.

Right now my area of specialty is adolescent medicine, and I love this vibrant and resilient age group. But my background in medicine is actually much more broad. I am fully board certified in internal medicine, pediatrics, and adolescent medicine (so yes, I know something about taking standardized tests!). My internal medicine and pediatrics residency was in Newark, NJ, where the patients were sick and the resources were limited. These were the days before the Affordable Care Act. And in the New Jersey districts that included Newark, a quarter of the population was uninsured, so taking care of uninsured patients was an all-day everyday norm for me. And I got to know these patients, bouncing in and out of the hospital over and over again. The vast majority of these uninsured patients are hard working people, often working two or more jobs to support their families. And when faced with purchasing



Dawn Hotz Toye commented on Sarah Myriam's post.



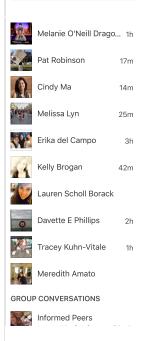
Christopher Kent likes Michael Acanfora's post.



Crystal Layne Sanders shared a link.



Kristy Lochmann Austin commented on her own post.





Louise Home 20+

ani sure that many parents ni tins foom would understand, without nearth insurance, people take a gamble that hopefully they won't get sick and that a catastrophic illness will not befall them. But sadly, cardiovascular disease progresses, cancer strikes, and chronic illnesses such as diabetes take a toll on the body. Without ongoing affordable continuous outpatient care with affordable medications, people present to the Emergency Department in very advanced stages of their illness. People only in their 40's present with massive heart attacks or strokes because their high blood pressure was untreated for several years as an outpatient. I still remember a woman presenting with a tumor the size of a baseball from her breast that was peeling, ulcerating, and oozing. She was hoping that the initial small lump would just go away because she did not have health insurance, and instead she was in the end stages of her disease. And the all-too common condition that strikes all of America, diabetes mellitus, can be a manageable condition with medications and tight medical oversight. Without it, it leads to heart attacks, peripheral vascular disease possibly needing amputation of the legs, kidney failure requiring dialysis, and blindness. If these are not enough to frighten you, then yes, it can also cause erectile dysfunction. So when patients are admitted into the hospital from the ER with these advanced stage conditions, they are using an exorbitant amount of healthcare dollars. They may be in the intensive care unit on ventilators. They may require dialysis 3 times a week. They may need open heart surgery or an amputation. And their hospital stay can easily cost hundreds of thousands of dollars that will never be repaid. So the cost to the American people for not having people universally covered comes at a personal and a financial expense. The quality of life being hooked up to a machine, in chronic pain, blind, or having had an amputation, is a profound personal cost. The financial cost to the hospital, the state, and ultimately, the taxpayers, is very very high.

So when the Affordable Care Act was introduced, the percentage of uninsured in Newark fell to 10.4%, and 6.9% in New Jersey overall. This has made a world of difference to many New Jersey residents to access health insurance. But the Affordable Care Act is far from perfect, and we should not be patting ourselves on the back and resting on our laurels that the American Health Cares Act did not pass a few weeks ago. Because there is a lot of work to be done with the existing healthcare plan for patients and for health systems. Some premiums and deductibles remain too high and prescriptions may be too expensive. So for many, the Affordable Care Act is far from affordable for many hard working families. So as your NJ Assemblywoman I will fight for healthcare to be affordable to all New Jersey residents, especially for seniors and hard working families. We need to protect Medicare and Medicaid and make prescriptions affordable.

And always included in the conversations on a state and national level is whether to fund for comprehensive reproductive health programs, most notably, the funding of Planned Parenthood. I dedicate my career to preventing teen pregnancy, as the far majority of adolescents do not wish to be pregnant at that age. And the far majority of the country has these mutual goals: reduce unintended pregnancy and reduce the number of abortions. Between 2008 and 2011 for the first time in 4 decades, the United States saw a steep drop in the number of unintended pregnancies which also led to a drop in the abortion rate in the US, with the most likely reason for the decline was availability of contraceptive services. And whatever yours, mine, or your neighbor's conscious opinion, women do have abortions, whether they are legal or not, and whether they are accessible or not. Before the Roe v. Wade decision of 1973, physicians witnessed hospital wards full of ill and dying women from infection, hemorrhage, or perforation following illegal abortions. And while the number of women who are presenting in a critical state has drastically decreased, they do occur from time to time in areas where abortion is inaccessible because of lack of access to an abortion provider or because of cost. I am not an abortion provider, but I do need to support my



Dawn Hotz Toye commented on Sarah Myriam's post.



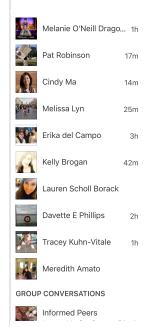
Christopher Kent likes Michael Acanfora's post.



Crystal Layne Sanders shared a link.



Kristy Lochmann Austin commented on her own post.





Home 20+

to go to work through picket lines and be intimidated or threatened. And I certainly never have had to wear a bullet proof vest to go to practice pediatrics. So it is important that we publicly support women and their healthcare providers.

And a paradoxical thing about abortions that may surprise you: Countries with more liberal abortion laws tend to have lower rates of abortion. So this may sound counterintuitive, but in order to reach our mutual goals of reducing unintended pregnancy and reducing abortion, these services need to remain safe and accessible. And Planned Parenthood has been providing and continues to provide comprehensive reproductive health care including Pap smears, sexually transmitted infection testing and HIV testing, contraception, and yes abortion services. So for the health of women in NJ and throughout the country, I stand with Planned Parenthood and fully support funding of Planned Parenthood.

Some of you may wonder what it is that I do at work all day? I was happy to have had the opportunity last week to tell students in the 8th grade what it is like to take care of people their age. And let me tell you, it is absolutely the most rewarding field in medicine that I can imagine. If I am even a small part of the reason that a young person makes it to a thriving adulthood having learned about self-esteem and resilience, then I am grateful. And although in day to day practice I am making decisions about medication treatment based on pathophysiology and how the body works, the bulk of my energy and time is geared towards keeping these kids safe. And that is because 70% of the reason that teenagers die is not due to medical illness. The number one cause of death is from unintentional injuries, second is suicide, and third is homicide. That is why your doctors spend so much time in your well visits talking about bicycle helmets, seat belts, distracted driving, binge drinking, and gun safety. My patients' parents, who come from all sides of the political spectrum including NRA members, know that I routinely ask whether there is a firearm in the house, especially if I am worried that their child is suicidal. And regardless of the political rhetoric going on in the media, I have never had a disagreement with a parent regarding a firearm. In the confines of the hospital or the office, parents know that we are mutually making decisions for the safety and the life of their child. So as a pediatrician and especially as a mother, reducing death by gun violence or accidental gun injury is of paramount importance to me, as it is to the far majority of the country. Every morning I drop my 6 year old son, Jacob, off at kindergarten. And every day after I watch him walk through the doors of Baker Elementary School, I think of the children in Newtown and how they were the same age. I think of the teachers who sacrificed their lives for them. And I have a deep sinking fear that we are not any safer in the years since Sandy Hook. And although it is true that I would not have a firearm in my house, what I really want to address nationally are the firearms that cause mass damage, most notably semi-automatic assault weapons. Because I see no reason for anyone who does not serve in uniform, to be in possession of a weapon whose sole purpose is to kill as many people as possible. And to me, this is not a political issue. This is me being a mom.

I feel fortunate that the majority of residents in New Jersey feel the same way that I do about gun violence. And because of that and because of our lawmakers hearing their constituents, New Jersey does have some of the strictest gun control policies in the country. So I can sleep a little easier knowing that New Jersey does not allow assault rifles and New Jersey requires background checks for the sale of handguns. Recently the State legislature and governor passed a law making it harder for perpetrators of domestic violence to own guns. And credit should be given for the hard work that another Democratic candidate running for this District's Assembly, Carol Murphy, has done to pass this bill. Clearly we have a lot of mutual interests.



Dawn Hotz Toye commented on Sarah Myriam's post.



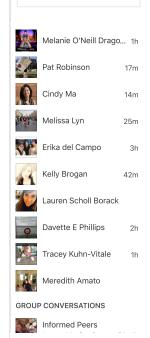
Christopher Kent likes Michael Acanfora's post.



Crystal Layne Sanders shared a link.



Kristy Lochmann Austin commented on her own post.





Louise Home 20+

victims of gun violence. I saw the man's chest sawed open and the rib cage open in a clamshell fashion as the doctors desperately tried in vain to salvage and sew up his obliterated heart. Shortly afterwards, a woman not much bigger than me was wheeled into the trauma bay, CPR being performed on her. She did not have her chest cracked open, as it was obvious when she got to the trauma bay that she was already dead. In medicine we are taught to remain neutral and not display our emotions on our sleeves. I can tell everybody in this room that your doctors and nurses have cried behind closed doors when we felt helpless to prevent an innocent death. This scene repeated over and over again during my residency in Newark, where patients were brought through the trauma bay, adults and kids. And over and over again, I cried over how senseless these deaths were.

So although New Jersey is ahead of many other states in its gun safety laws, there is still work to be done. For example, gun silencers may be popular in the movies and on TV, but in real life if a handgun is fired, it is likely for a reason to threaten someone, to kill someone, or to kill themselves. And in those cases, a life may possibly be saved if a bystander or a police officer hears that shot. So I would support legislation banning the use of silencers on handguns.

Most people who know me know that I was devastated by the results of the general election. Among a myriad of reasons that I was worried, the clear exposure of our nation's racially and ethnically charged environment caused me a great amount of consternation. My immediate thought was that my children, who are half Taiwanese and half Sri Lankan, would grow up with a harder childhood than I had grown up with. I felt my fears were validated by racial attacks across the country, vandalism in nearby communities, and a hate group flyer distributed in our own district. Although I was never picked on or the recipient of an attack while growing up here, I certainly was cognizant that I was an outsider and not always well understood in a town that in the 1980's was not nearly as racially and ethnically diverse as it is today. And instead of talking about it 30 years ago, I remember the silence. If we don't talk about it, then there's no problem and nothing to talk about. But what is different today is that many many people, including the leaders of our Township and neighboring towns, do talk about it. Our parents, teachers, police officers, Township leadership, and community activists have come out and made it very clear to our district that hate has no home here. And as a person of color who has grown up here, I noticed those efforts. And it is up to all of us as adults and role models for our children to step out of our environments, step out of social media, and come out to meet one another. Although we all say we are super busy, I have joined service organizations, volunteered at school events, and met people in the neighborhood. And regardless of where people lean politically, I know that we are all in the effort together to make our community a safe place for our children.

I want to address this next statement towards any young people who may not fit into what society expects of them, particularly if your body at birth is not congruent with who you are on the inside. You have come to me in my office or in the hospital wondering whether I will treat you with respect and affirm your gender identity. In the office, I hope you know that I see you for who you are on the inside. In the hospital, I have lamented your devastated feelings in the current political climate. Sadly, I know that some of you have tried to hurt yourselves since that time. Each day I have gone home from work wondering whether I have done enough for you, and I always know that I can always do more. Because we know that this is not about bathrooms. This is about recognizing a human soul as their true self. And now you know that I will publicly and proudly speak up for transgender equality in NJ. If I



Dawn Hotz Toye commented on Sarah Myriam's post.



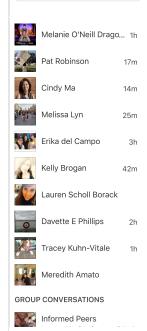
Christopher Kent likes Michael Acanfora's post.



Crystal Layne Sanders shared a link.



Kristy Lochmann Austin commented on her own post.



nonoi transgenuei resiuents in No

Louise

Home 20+

I realize that I am a newcomer to politics but I have been a lifelong Democrat. I am running in the Democratic primary but not endorsed by the Democratic party line. This will be an uphill climb to win this primary but I absolutely think that it is possible. And judging by the response of people I have spoken to in the district, you think so too. But I am going to need a lot of help from all of you tonight. For the registered Democrats and unaffiliated Independents, please come out and vote on June 6. For the Republicans in the room, thank you for being here. Many of you have given me much needed advice in life through the years. I know you have friends across the aisle. Please encourage them to come out and vote in the Democratic Primary on June 6. Because turnout is notoriously low for state elections and especially for a primary. And I have the gall to think that it is of utmost importance that a pediatrician, particularly an academic pediatrician that practices evidence based medicine and adheres to guidelines of the American Academy of Pediatrics, be at the voting table when these bills are decided on. To everybody here: be engaged. Half of the country did not vote in the general election. Learn about all of your candidates on the ticket. Come out to meet them, and then vote based on a well-informed decision. I am confident that each candidate in the 7th Legislative District is qualified for elected office, so I think there are no right or wrong choices in candidates. But I want you to be a part of the democracy and be an engaged voter.

And in the run for governor, we are looking for a leader for our state to succeed our current governor. There are several qualified candidates running on the Democratic ticket. But when I think of who I hold shared values with, it is Jim Johnson that I see being a visionary leader for the state of New Jersey. He has a vision to build our economy and invest in our infrastructure. He plans to make New Jersey a leader in renewable energy, increase transparency in government, fully fund the school funding formula, and implementing universal pre-K. I'm proud to be joining the slate with Jim Johnson for Governor as Jennifer Chuang for Assemblywoman.

My parents moved to the United States to pursue higher education and to live in a country with political freedom. They grew up under martial law in Taiwan. People who spoke out against the government, especially academics, were killed, arrested, or disappeared never to be spoken of again. History books were rewritten and the next generation (my generation) did not bear witness to the same level of atrocities that my parents' generation witnessed. And I think it is fair to say that my sister, an internal medicine physician, and I have achieved much of what my parents had dreamed about: that their 2 daughters study hard, work hard, raise a family, and contribute to their fields while living in political freedom. And I have my dream career. I am practicing a field of medicine that I absolutely adore, I teach some of the brightest medical students and pediatric residents in the country, and I work with a vibrant team of colleagues who are dedicated to helping young people thrive. And yet, I never thought that we would be facing national leadership that is openly questioning the value of science, destroying the arts and wrecking the environment. After a while I wonder whether the letters, petitions, phone calls, and visits to Capitol Hill that I make are effective enough. And I think back to our Moorestown High School motto, as taught to me by Mr. Rhody, "Carpe Diem!" Seize the day! So I may be new in politics, but I am not new to fighting against inequity. With all of your help, we can be engaged, we can be heard in the government, and we can save lives.

Thank you.



Dawn Hotz Toye commented on Sarah Myriam's post.



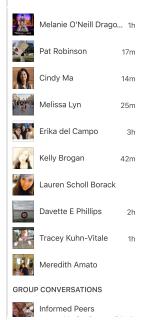
Christopher Kent likes Michael Acanfora's post.



Crystal Layne Sanders shared a link.



Kristy Lochmann Austin commented on her own post.



Louise Home 20+ Search Facebook Dawn Hotz Toye commented on Sarah 44 Chronological Myriam's post. 11 shares 5 Comments Christopher Kent likes Michael Acanfora's post. Toni Resnick That was amazing. brava! Like · Reply · 1 · April 4 at 10:45pm **Crystal Layne Sanders** Dr. Jennifer Chuang for New Jersey State Assembly 7th District Thanks, Toni! shared a link. Like \cdot Reply \cdot April 4 at 11:17pm Kristy Lochmann Austin commented on her own Yamini Nat Deborah Malamud do you know people in this district? Like · Reply · April 5 at 7:38am Show Older 1 Reply Gloria Valiente Absolutely amazing!!! Like · Reply · April 6 at 12:52am Melanie O'Neill Drago... 1h Patty Stolc Regarding exemptions, can you please provide the financial statistics behind VAERS and are you also informing your patients and children that pharma companies are exempt for financial damages cause by vaccines and Pat Robinson 17m that instead, taxpayers are making financial payments to vaccine damaged individuals? Like · Reply · 2 · April 6 at 5:46pm Cindy Ma 14m Emanuel Fleming Where there is risk, there must be choice! Like · Reply · 13 hours ago Melissa Lyn 25m Write a comment... Erika del Campo Kelly Brogan 42m About Create Ad Create Page Developers Careers Privacy Cookies Ad Choices Terms Help Lauren Scholl Borack Facebook © 2017 English (US) 日本語 Français (France) Español 中文(简体) العربية Português (Brasil) Italiano 한국어 Deutsch हिन्दी Davette E Phillips

Search

Tracey Kuhn-Vitale

Meredith Amato
GROUP CONVERSATIONS
Informed Peers