



## ANNOUNCEMENT SPEECH

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CANDIDATE FOR BINGHAMTON MAYOR  
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Good evening and welcome. It's great to see so many friends, colleagues, family members and city residents. I thank you all for coming tonight.

I'd also like to welcome several elected officials who are here with us; former Mayor Richard Bucci, Broome County Clerk Rick Blythe, Broome County Legislator Jerry Marinich. Town of Conklin Supervisor and County Republican Chairperson Debbie Preston, I thank you all for joining us.

I am proud and humbled to stand before you tonight. I have been fortunate enough to serve this community in a number of different, but significant ways, and tonight is the culmination of years of community service that began from my very first day in Binghamton. In order to truly convey my commitment to public service I'll need a moment to tell you a little bit about my background.

I'd like to introduce to you members of my family who are joining us tonight from Rochester, NY; my father, Dr. Claude David and my mother Virginia David. I'm grateful that both of you could be here tonight to support me. It's these two individuals who were instrumental in teaching me the values of integrity, an honest days work and community service.

My father is an immigrant who came to the United States as a young man in the late 1960's to create a better life and start a family. He was born on the island of Mauritius, which is located in the Indian Ocean off the south east coast of Madagascar. In 1961, my father was one of only two high school seniors on the entire island to win; "The English Scholarship", which is a competitive scholarship that is awarded to only two students each year, and allows you to attend any university of your choice to study any subject or degree you want regardless of the program's length. I've often asked him if he scored number one or number two that year, and he won't tell me. But needless to say I learned at a young age how dedication can literally change the course of your life and make dreams become a reality.

My father is now retired, but spent his entire professional career as Doctor in obstetrics and gynecology. One of my earliest memories is asking my father why that particular field interested him when there are so many to choose from. His answer was simple. He wanted to help bring life into the world. But with his passion came a great deal of personal sacrifice. Anyone who has ever had a child knows newborns are seldom delivered during eight to five, Monday through Friday. My father was always on call mornings', nights', weekends' and holidays', and when he was paged he went to the hospital regardless of what was going on with his family. It was all part of the personal sacrifice he made to be there for his patients when they needed him. I understood very early that part of the definition of service, whether it's public or private, is sacrifice.

My mother is currently the chairperson of the Department of Social Work at Nazareth College in Rochester, and she is also a lifelong Democrat. But I can tell you tonight mom you are not alone in this room because many of the people who have helped me get to this point are Democrats, and I am deeply appreciative of all their support and encouragement. In this room on this night we are all just people who care deeply about the future of our City and, regardless of our political affiliation, we are all committed to working together to reach our common goals.

My mother showed me how to be a compassionate person, and to help those who are less fortunate. I remember vividly as my mother would take me to the soup kitchen as a young boy and I would peel potatoes and help her prepare meals for the homeless. It was truly an eye-opening experience seeing homelessness up close on the inner city streets of Rochester, NY. You really do gain an appreciation for family and what it means.

Like any good parent, mine have spent their adult careers making sacrifices so their two children could have a life that was better than their own. As you know by now, education is very important to both of my parents and they worked very hard and went without to make certain both their children received a quality education. I went on to receive a Masters Degree in Public Administration from Binghamton University, and my sister Rachel is a second year medical student at Cornell University, and is following in my father's footsteps. I am currently following in my mother's footsteps and work in higher education. As many of you know I am the Public Affairs Officer at Broome Community College, where I work as part of an administration that is dedicated to providing the highest caliber education to students of all ages.

I believe that education is one of the building blocks to a prosperous future. Working to help ensure that students get a strong start on life-long learning, and providing a second chance for those who wish to reignite their careers, or change paths altogether, has been an incredible experience. Education leads to a well trained workforce, a robust economy and jobs for our community. I'm grateful to have the opportunity to work at such a prestigious academic institution.

But BCC is not where I started my tenure in the Southern Tier. I started my career as a television journalist at WBNG Channel 12. Working as a journalist at Channel 12 is actually how I met many of you and established the roots that resulted in an investment in this community and many lifelong personal and professional relationships.

Perhaps the most significant portion of my career in Binghamton was spent working at City Hall. I was privileged to have the opportunity to spend six years working in the Mayor's Office with former Mayor Richard Bucci. Mayor Bucci, I want to thank you for attending tonight and for giving me the opportunity to serve this City. That opportunity working in the Mayor's Office as Director of Community Relations and Deputy Mayor made me intimately familiar with the inner workings of Binghamton City Government. That experience also provided me with the expertise necessary to address the current complex financial and economic challenges head on. Mayor I'm truly grateful for all your support.

I sincerely believe that as residents, community leaders and public officials, we all need to do our part and work together if we are to reach our common goal of success and prosperity. So, after leaving City Hall three years ago, I wanted to find a way to continue contributing to the economic and financial growth of the City of Binghamton. I formed Confluence Enterprises; a Corporation whose primary mission is investing in the City of Binghamton.

So far Confluence Enterprises has invested close to one-million dollars in one building renovation project downtown and two businesses on State Street, and there are also two additional projects in the works. In fact Terra Cotta, this business we are all standing in, is one of the businesses I recently purchased and I specifically picked Terra Cotta for tonight's event because I believe it is a symbol.

In our community we continue to see residents and businesses leaving Binghamton to find other communities to live, work and raise a family. In fact, many of you may not know this but Terra Cotta was originally slated to close at the end of last year.

I'd ask you all to take a moment and look around at this beautiful facility, the architecture and the history of this building. I believe this business is an asset to Binghamton. It provides dozens of jobs, supports many local businesses, generates sales tax for our local economy and provides a valuable service to individuals across this region. That's why I wanted to save it. It's important to show people that we don't need to sit by idly as residents and businesses leave Binghamton. This is one example of what can happen when one person says enough is enough and gets involved. We must practice what we preach.

City government must be run like a business. You need to surround yourself with qualified and experienced individuals. You need to make tough decisions in order to survive and make no mistake we are facing the toughest economic and financial times we've seen in decades at the local, state and national levels. Like many business owners, I too am making tough decisions to ensure this business survives as well as my other business, Flashbacks.

Since the day I left City Hall just over three years ago not a single month has gone by in which many people, both democrats, republicans and others, have asked me if I am running for political office. I'm sincerely grateful for all of the bi-partisan expressions of support and encouragement that I've received. Tonight I will answer that question as I formally announce my intention to run for Mayor of the City of Binghamton. Tonight I begin my campaign to become the next leader of our City. I believe that this race for Mayor is the most important Mayoral race in decades. Now more than ever, the future of our City is at stake.

My campaign for Mayor will not focus on the mistakes of Matt Ryan and his Administration. I intend to run a positive grassroots campaign that will focus on the issues that are important to local residents. My campaign will focus on how Rich David will improve this City and make Binghamton a better place to live, work and raise a family. I will go door to door in every district to make my case and explain why I am the most qualified person to lead our City over the next four years. I will highlight why my combination of education, public service and business experience will allow me to navigate through the in-depth economic and financial challenges that lie ahead.

In order to reach our goal of success and prosperity we must however be realistic and straightforward about the challenges facing Binghamton.

With the New Year comes a crushing double digit increase in residential and commercial property taxes. This will not lead to a better Binghamton and is a primary reason that businesses and residents are leaving the City.

With the New Year comes a double digit increase in water rates for City residents. This will not lead to a better Binghamton and is a deterrent for businesses and residents looking to locate to our City.

With the New Year comes a massive double digit increase in sewer rates. This will not lead to a better Binghamton. In fact county residents are seeing water and sewer rates increase by double digits in municipalities across Broome. The decisions that are made at City Hall not only affect Binghamton residents, but impact the entire region.

We must get back to the basics and focus on core functions of City government; functions such as police and fire protection, sanitation, snow removal, code enforcement, street reconstruction, water service, and a host of others. We need to re-evaluate, reorganize and streamline city services. Quite simply we need to reduce

expenses and do more with less. Inaction is not an option and we can no longer avoid making tough decisions because they might be unpopular. Simply talking about making tough decisions is not enough. It's time we roll up our sleeves, get to work and get the job done.

My campaign will focus on stabilizing municipal finances, improving public safety, expanding economic development opportunities, investing in our public infrastructure and enhancing our parks and neighborhoods. Over the course of the coming months I will outline my plans and proposals in greater detail, but one thing is absolutely clear. We need to rein in spending because local taxpayers can no longer afford current spending levels. It is also vitally important that we identify, protect, and increase current sources of revenue. At the same time we need to explore creative new initiatives that could become future sources of income, prominence, and opportunity for the City.

This election cannot be about personal or party politics. This campaign must be about the needs of the residents, the taxpayers and the needs of this community, not just one segment of the community but the entire community. Our collective needs must come first.

In 2005 we saw a very nasty and contentious mayoral campaign, which resulted in a three way race and ended with not one candidate receiving the majority of votes. We've all seen and continue to feel first hand the impact of that race, a race that was heavy on negative campaigning but light on discussion of issues and matters of importance. It is my pledge to you tonight that will not happen this time around.

My campaign begins tonight with one person. And while no one person can do it all, one person can take the lead and coordinate our public resources toward a common goal and direction. That includes working together with County and State leaders.

One person can have the vision and one person can empower others to get involved. Residents and business owners across Binghamton want to be inspired; they just need someone to take the lead. I am not the first person to get involved and make private investments and I know I will not be the last. But we need to get back to the point where positive development and investment do not randomly occur "in spite of City Hall". But instead, they are the result of "active support" from City Hall.

I am asking you to join me tonight because together we can make a difference.

Because, when I look at Binghamton I see a City filled with hope and promise.

When I talk to Binghamton residents they tell me how much they care about their community, and that they want their elected officials to work together regardless of party affiliation.

And when I walk down Binghamton's streets I see a City where the seeds for growth were set long ago. Now we need an experienced leader to tackle tough challenges head on and move our City to the next level. Running for Mayor is not about me. I'm running for Mayor for you, and you, and you, and for all the people in this room and for all the residents in the City who deserve progress and results.

As I conclude tonight I want to leave you with a quote that I feel is very relevant to the situation we face. "I may not know ALL the keys to success, but I know the key to failure is trying to please everyone."

The road ahead will undoubtedly be long and there will be several hurdles along the way. But we will overcome them with our resolve and persistence. And while we CAN'T please everyone, we will weather this financial and economic storm together and put this City back on track.

Our future begins now.

Thank you and good night!