



Educational Excellence in the Lasallian Tradition

La Salle Academy

Conducted by the Brothers of the Christian Schools

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Spring 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Dr. Catherine Guerriero and I am the President of La Salle Academy, the oldest boys' Catholic High School in New York City. Two years ago, I had the great good fortune to be able to launch an aggressive and stellar campaign to be the next Public Advocate of New York City. The Public Advocate, as you might know, is a city-wide position here in NYC, and "second-seat" to the Mayor. In this campaign, and as a first-time candidate, I was able to compete well, and aggressively, and I might add, eloquently and elegantly. Many of the reasons for my success (raising close to a million dollars, getting hundreds of endorsements including close to 100 union endorsements) as first-time candidate for such a high-level position – can be found in the guidance and expertise of Mr. Robert Berkowitz and the Dilenschneider Group. He is unmatched and unparalleled in this communications expertise, in and out of the political arena. Allow me to explain.

I was not a "kid" when I came to Mr. Berkowitz. At 40 years old, however, I had planned this run for twenty years. With a sizable resume, background (a PHD in Education policy and a professorship at Columbia University), and a high level verbal ability, I thought I was ready to go. I was not. Mr. Berkowitz knew better. With the deft hand of someone who was practiced in the art of taking sizable egos with sizable intellects and "bursting their bubbles," he carefully, over months of work, brought my communications skills to a new level of fluidity and expertise. He toned down the "rhetoric" aspect of my language that comes so easily with verbal, yet novice, politicians. He specifically highlighted the different modalities of communicating verbally, depending on the audience, ie, the size, room, audience, style of presentation. He corrected me of my "one size fits all" type of stumping. He gave me a sense of connecting to the audience - where they are and who they are. He was thoughtful and aggressive, idea-driven and also connecting to an authentic and instinctive sense about my campaign, my personal strengths and the prescient messaging of New York City inside that specific campaign. His knowledge of city politics became the underpinning for our work, but he never lost sight of me as the client – a woman, a mother, a new candidate, a working class woman, an intellectual and mid-career professional.

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We have maintained our professional relationship even after my candidacy (I lost). I consider Mr. Berkowitz a confidant, a mentor and a friend. And – I most certainly will hire him the next time I run. In the interim, he helps me with the messaging I have here as the President of one of the most prestigious private high schools in New York City. I recommend him to anyone who wants to be better and act better, and in the process, communicate the exact message that they are intending to the exact audience that they are speaking to.

Sincerely,



Dr. Catherine Guerriero, Ph.D., M.P.A.
President, La Salle Academy