

MEDIA BACKGROUNDER

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THE COMMUNITY THAT GAVE HER AN OPPORTUNITY. NOW SHE'S READY TO SERVE IT.

WASHINGTON, DC (Ward 1) - La historia de Jackie Reyes-Yanes, una inmigrante salvadoreña que convirtió los desafíos en servicio público y hoy busca representar al Ward 1 en el Concejo de DC.

For more than three decades, Jackie Reyes-Yanes has called Ward 1 home. Today, she is seeking to serve the community that gave her an opportunity when she needed it most.

Jackie Reyes-Yanes arrived in Washington, DC from El Salvador in June 1990. She was just 12 years old.

She left behind a civil war and arrived in an unfamiliar city without speaking English and facing an uncertain future. Her family settled in Mount Pleasant, a neighborhood that would become the only home she has truly known.

As their plane descended over Washington that summer morning in 1990, Jackie's father looked out the window at the Washington Monument illuminated against the skyline. He then turned to his 12-year-old daughter and said words that would stay with her for the rest of her life:

"Jackie, this is our home now, and you are my hope."

At the time, she could not have known how deeply those words would shape her future.

They stayed with her through some of the most difficult moments of her life: experiencing homelessness, becoming a teenage mother, and navigating the challenges of building a life in a new country as an immigrant. They also became the foundation of her commitment to public service and her belief that everyone deserves an opportunity to succeed.

Ward 1 did more than welcome her family. It gave them a chance. The community provided access to schools, mentors, neighbors, and organizations that believed in her potential. Institutions such as the Latin American Youth Center (LAYC), Mary's Center, and countless community leaders demonstrated that when a community invests in its people, lives can be transformed.

That experience shaped Jackie's lifelong commitment to service.

For more than 20 years, she has dedicated her career to helping families across Washington, DC. She has had the honor of serving alongside former Councilmember Jim Graham and under the administrations of Mayor Adrian Fenty and Mayor Muriel Bowser.

Throughout her public service career, Jackie became the first Salvadoran to lead the Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs and the first Latina to serve as Director of the Mayor's Office on Community Affairs.

In those roles, she worked to strengthen the relationship between government and historically underserved communities, expanding access to services, resources, and opportunities for residents across the District.

JACKIE - THE WARRIOR FOR WARD 1



During the COVID-19 pandemic, Jackie helped connect more than 20,000 residents to vaccines, emergency assistance, and essential services. She worked to ensure that immigrant families, seniors, essential workers, and small businesses were not left behind during one of the most challenging periods in the city's history.

But for Jackie, this campaign has never been about herself.
It is about the family struggling to pay rent.
It is about parents searching for affordable childcare.
It is about seniors who deserve to age with dignity.
It is about immigrant families facing uncertainty and fear.
It is about small business owners working to keep their doors open.
And it is about ensuring that the people who built Ward 1 can continue to call it home.

At a time when many residents are concerned about rising costs, housing affordability, and economic uncertainty, Jackie believes government must be closer to the people it serves, not further away.

She understands these challenges because she has lived them.

She knows what it feels like to be overlooked. She knows what it means to need help and hope someone answers. And she knows government can be a powerful tool for creating opportunity when it works for the people.

That is why she is running for the Ward 1 seat on the Council of the District of Columbia.

Her vision is straightforward: truly affordable housing, accessible childcare, safer neighborhoods, stronger small businesses, and a government that treats every resident with dignity and respect.

She wants to build a Ward 1 where working families can remain in their neighborhoods, where seniors can age with dignity, where young people have access to meaningful opportunities, and where immigrants can live without fear.

She also believes that a strong Ward 1 depends on strong small businesses, vibrant commercial corridors, and an economy that works for everyone—not just a few.

Thirty-six years after arriving in Washington, Jackie Reyes-Yanes still believes in the power of opportunity.

Ward 1 invested in her.

Now she is ready to give back everything she has learned, everything she has built, and all of her public service experience to the community that helped shape her life.

Because this community gave her a future.

And together, she believes they can build an even better one for the next generation.

The Time Is Now.

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