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...Firefighter for the House

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nual fire camp for young women. It's now in its 10th year.

One winter, she realized TVF&R was getting lots of 911 calls to check on unhoused people, and it was putting a burden on the system. So with support from her union, she started a free clinic for houseless residents of Tigard and King City. Every Saturday from November to March she volunteers at a space in Tigard's severe weather shelter to do triage and foot care, and she partners with county health officers to provide flu shots and vaccinations.

She also became one of the most active volunteers in the union's political program, and traveled to Salem repeatedly to testify on legislation. In May 2019, she was at the Capitol with her fellow IAFF members when she got a text: "Come to the gallery." Democrats were preparing to vote on a bill to cut contributions to public employee retirement accounts.

"All the firefighters, we were all in uniform ... We stood there while they screwed us over. We wanted them to have to bear witness that these are the faces

of the people doing the work."

Now one of those faces will most likely be heading to the Capitol as a legislator. Grayber got the idea to run for office from her own state representative, staunch labor ally Margaret Doherty. After spending a day at the Portland Metro Fire Camp, Doherty told Grayber she was planning to retire, and suggested she run to replace her.

"I laughed," Grayber recalls. "I came home that night and told my husband, 'Rep Doherty said the craziest thing to me.' And he looked at me and said, 'Oh my god, why wouldn't you?' I said, 'Because I'm not a politician.'"

Then it dawned on her: "I look at the world my kids are about to inherit. I look at the things I've fought for. When I go to work and someone's having the worst day of their life, I have the ability to tackle that head-on and make things better one call at a time." Being in the Legislature, she'd have a chance to make things better on a much bigger scale.

Sponsored by her union, Grayber enrolled in the Oregon Labor Candidates School, and learned the nuts and bolts of run-

"All these things that we could kind of politely ignore and talk around, we can't do that any more. The patient is bleeding out. Let's get to work."

— Firefighter Dacia Grayber, running for HD 35



ning a political campaign. She graduated March 7, just as the pandemic hit.

Now co-workers, even some conservative ones, are rooting for her. Grayber tends to swear, so they're preparing her for the Legislature with a swear jar. "Every time I drop an f-bomb, I have to put a dollar in."

House District 35 covers all of Tigard, some of Southwest Portland, and a little sliver of Clackamas County.

"It's a strong labor district, a lot of labor households," Grayber says. "I'm excited by that. It's a lot of working class folks."

Her opponent, conservative Republican Bob Niemeyer, got just 33% of the vote in his challenge to Doherty two years ago, but Grayber's supporters aren't taking chances. As of early September, her campaign had raised \$116,000, including over \$55,000 from her union's local, state and national political action committees, and cash and in-kind support from a dozen other

unions. Niemeyer has raised just \$1,500.

If Grayber wins, she'll fight to expand health coverage, affordable housing, and public transportation infrastructure. She'll push to lower college tuition, reduce carbon emissions, and build more renewable energy. Having been the one who had to tell a mother her child was dead due to gun violence, she wants common sense gun violence reduction measures, like secure storage of firearms. She wants police reform. She wants a more equitable tax code. She wants Oregon to be better prepared for earthquakes and wildfires.

The work ahead is urgent. Grayber likens it to her work as a firefighter. "Right now the entire building is on fire, and people are jumping out the window. We have this emergency in our state, and across the nation."

MORE ABOUT HER CAMPAIGN
DaciaForOregon.com

Register to Vote!

In Oregon, the deadline to register to vote is Tuesday, Oct. 13. You can register online, by mail, or in person. If registering by mail, it must be postmarked by Oct. 13.

In Washington, the deadline to register online is Monday, Oct. 26.

The deadline for registering by mail is (received by) Monday, Oct. 26.

The deadline to register in person is Tuesday, Nov. 3. The deadline to update an existing voter registration with a new name or address is Monday, Oct. 26.

You can also register and vote on Election Day.

Election day is Tuesday, Nov. 3

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