

Tori Hill seeks MN house seat

Written by Harry Colbert, Jr.
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Education is a top priority in the household of Tori Hill.

Hill, a graduate of Vassar College, has three children who are high-achievers in their scholastic careers. Hill's eldest child, Brandon Hill, 19, is attending Stanford University on an academic scholarship, and received scholarship offers from Yale, Harvard, Northwestern and more. Her daughter, Toria Hill, 16, an 11th grader at Eden Prairie High School is taking college level courses and her youngest daughter, Naya Hill, 14, is an 8th grader in advanced placements classes.

So, it should come as no surprise that Hill is running for the Minnesota State House of Representatives on a platform of improving public education throughout the state. Hill is the DFL candidate for the House in Dist. 48(B). The district encompasses the southern portion of Eden Prairie.

"Education is a top priority," said Hill who is running to unseat Republican incumbent, Jenifer Loon. "We've got to address the achievement gap in this state. I know all kids can achieve. It's important to focus on early childhood development. It's also important to have teachers and administrators with a vested interest in students' success."

Hill, who previously ran for the Eden Prairie School Board, also has served as PTO president of Cedar Ridge Elementary School and served on several education- related boards.

But education is not Hill's sole focus.

"The reason I'm running is because I'm concerned about the community," said Hill. "The current State Legislature has gotten off track with divisive legislation and gridlock."

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Hill said the two current proposed amendment changes – voter ID and gay marriage ban – are examples of the Legislature dividing communities. She said her opponent supports both initiatives. Hill is opposed to both.

Hill said while she thinks her opponent is a good person; she said she simply has some bad policies.

Hill said she is also a supporter of light rail in her district. She said with an aging population, light rail will offer increase accessibility for area residents. She also said it can enhance economic opportunities for area businesses such as United Healthcare.

Hill, who has a background in sales management for Fortune 500 companies, and is the sister of Dr. Dara Richardson-Heron, CEO of the YWCA USA, has received several endorsements. Her endorsements include Education Minnesota, Womenwinning, the Minnesota AFL-CIO, Gov. Mark Dayton and Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak.

For those who may think Hill would have a tough go of things in Eden Prairie, Hill said it's quite the opposite. "I'm out door knocking every day and I'm talking to Republicans, Democrats and Independents and they are all receptive to my message," said Hill. "Just the other day I knocked on a gentleman's door and spoke with him and he said, 'I normally vote Republican, but I will vote for you.'"

Hill also notes that Eden Prairie broke gender and racial barriers more than 15 years ago when it elected Dr. Jean Harris as the city's first African-American and woman mayor.