

BULLETIN

## Deciding to Run

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Nicole Gilliss had a burning issue that motivated her to run for office.

"When I decided to run for council in 2011, there was no doctor in our little town of Hudson's Hope, and hadn't been for three years. I wanted desperately for council to work towards recruiting a resident physician," says Gilliss. "I've always been interested in politics, and I wanted to be part of decision making and solutions, instead of someone speculating and whining from the sidelines."

A combined lab/x-ray technologist, Gilliss became the chief steward at her site within six months of becoming an HSA member in 2005, and has been active in HSA ever since. She currently serves as chief steward at both Hudson's Hope Health Centre and Chetwynd General Hospital, as an alternate member-at-large for Region 10, and on HSA's Trial Committee. Until her election as a councillor in Hudson's Hope, she also served as an HSA constituency liaison.

Gilliss credits her HSA activism with helping her decide to run, and giving her the skills to win an election. "I know working with HSA and attending HSA workshops and events has helped me improve my public speaking skills, as well as given me confidence to fight for issues that are important to me," says Gilliss.

Attending an HSA Election Campaign School in February 2011 helped enormously. "At the beginning of the workshop I was considering running in the fall 2011 municipal election, but by the end of the workshop I had so much confidence and had received so much positive feedback from the instructors and fellow workshop attendees my decision was made: I was running!"

Receiving support from HSA's Political Action Fund also helped. "I live in a small community where very little 'campaigning' is done, because more often than not candidates have lived here forever and everyone knows them," says Gilliss. "When I ran I had lived in Hudson's Hope for only two and half years, so in small town years that's a newbie for sure. The political action funding allowed me to spend money on mail-out brochures and newspaper advertising. And I think it gained me a lot of credibility with voters. They were happy to see a real effort put into a campaign."

As for that burning issue that started it all? "We did it," says Gilliss. "Council launched an innovative working group with co-operating industry partners within our municipality, and we were successful in recruiting a doctor and his family to Hudson's Hope."

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