

ELECT

OLGA

BONFIGLIO

Kalamazoo County Treasurer

BONFIGLIO will be...

A New Kind of County Treasurer

Our needs are changing in Kalamazoo County, but our elected administrative offices in this county have remained virtually unchanged since the 19th century. That's why **OLGA BONFIGLIO** promises to transform the Kalamazoo County Treasurer's office from a 19th century clerical position into a 21st century leadership position for economic development.

As treasurer **BONFIGLIO** will help bring new jobs and economic vitality to our area. She'll do it by being an advocate, connector, and facilitator among businesses, educational institutions, and local governments on economic development issues. And, as an experienced manager she will also make sure that the daily operations of the treasurer's office are handled both efficiently and prudently.

BONFIGLIO understands...

The Economic Challenges We Face

It sounds trite to say that the global economy is raising the stakes for everyone, everywhere. But, we in Kalamazoo County know only too well the truth of this statement. Painful downsizings and corporate mergers plagued us in the 1990s and created a climate of uncertainty about our economic future. While we are currently enjoying a vibrant economy amidst the greatest boom in American history, most would agree



that Kalamazoo County's economic future remains unsettled at best. The new, technology-driven global economy requires that our county's leaders take a more active approach in responding to the changing economic realities. It's either that, or face an unpleasant decline in the high quality of life which we have come to expect here.

The most important thing to understand about businesses in our new economy is this: Increasingly, businesses can locate anywhere in the world. Electronic commerce, lower trade barriers, free movement of capital and information across borders, and the continuous drop in shipping costs make it necessary for even the most staid industrial corporation to reconsider regularly where to do business. We can't afford to take for granted that the companies we have now will be here forever.

In order to attract and retain businesses we must make a conscious effort to preserve those things which make our community a great place to do business – and a great place to live. That's because more and more business owners and managers know that in order to attract top-notch people, they must locate their operations in communities with a high quality of life. And, that means that our local communities must now focus on both economic growth and quality of life or risk losing both in the end.

If businesses can increasingly locate anywhere in the world, we must find ways to make Kalamazoo County attractive to them. Our county will be judged in three broad categories: 1) the quality of our infrastructure, 2) the caliber of our people, and 3) the overall quality of life in our community. As it turns out, we have an excellent physical infrastructure that has shown itself capable of attracting world-class businesses. We have good roads with easy access to major highways, ample land for development, and affordable, high-quality utilities. But, we need to improve the business environment by making it easier for companies to deal with the county and its many municipalities.

The caliber of our people is first-rate. We have a well-educated and well-trained work force and, we have excellent institutions of higher education. But, we need to emphasize lifelong learning if we expect to meet the demands of this rapidly changing global economy.

Finally, the overall quality of life in our county is very high. We are fortunate to have diverse choices for living – urban, suburban, village and rural. We also have a bounty of cultural assets such as the Kalamazoo Symphony and the Civic Theatre. And, we have superb recreational assets including our parks, lakes and natural areas. In addition, our thriving neighborhoods, good schools and safe streets are things we must protect and never take for granted. That's because quality of life is becoming ever more crucial to attracting businesses. And so, we must work hard to make our county a place where people want to come not only to make a living, but also to make a life for themselves and their families.

BONFIGLIO offers...

New Leadership For A New Economy

You may be wondering what the county treasurer can do to aid economic development in our area? The answer is...plenty. When in office Bonfiglio pledges to do the following:

- Work directly with business people, local officials, educational leaders and aspiring entrepreneurs to help bring new jobs and new businesses to our county.
- Seek grants to aid new business development.
- Help facilitate business start-ups.
- Put investors in contact with entrepreneurs.
- Encourage development of training and education programs to prepare people for work in our county.
- Help turn university research into products and services that will provide employment for people in our county.

More than ever we need a countywide advocate for economic development, someone who can be a bridge between education, business and government.

BONFIGLIO promises...

Efficient, Prudent Management of Routine Business

The staff in the county treasurer's office works very much like the staff in a bank. They take in money and then disburse it in accordance with the day-to-day operational needs of the county. Bonfiglio promises to keep these routine operations running smoothly.

The county treasurer personally attends to two major tasks: investing the county's excess cash and collecting delinquent taxes. The first task—investing surplus funds – requires one crucial trait: caution. Bonfiglio pledges to invest excess funds not immediately needed by the county

KALAMAZOO COUNTY TREASURER

only in the most conservative financial instruments. What happened in Orange County, California a few years ago – where the county treasurer lost billions through speculation and put the county into bankruptcy – must never happen here. And, with Bonfiglio as county treasurer, it never will. As of next year, the second task – collecting delinquent taxes – will be taken over by the state.

The narrowing scope of the county treasurer's official duties means that BONFIGLIO will be able to devote more time and effort to bringing jobs and economic vitality to our area. By focusing on economic development, she will begin the process of turning a 19th century office into one which is relevant to the needs of the 21st century. This is especially important to our county as the world shifts from an industrial economy to a global information society.

BONFIGLIO is...

An Experienced and Informed Leader

OLGA BONFIGLIO has extensive experience as a manager and a leader. As director of community relations for Borgess Medical Center she managed a communications and press relations staff. As a professor at the Haworth College of Business at Western Michigan University she taught classes in business communication, intercultural communication, and the global economy. As a professor of social studies education at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, she trained aspiring and practicing teachers in the citizenship component of elementary and secondary education. As a fellow in the prestigious W. K. Kellogg Foundation National Fellowship Program she traveled in Europe, Latin America, China, and Russia studying the emerging global economy. As part of her program she helped to organize a trade mission to South Korea and Japan for the Michigan Department of Commerce.

BONFIGLIO has also been a consultant and trainer to business people and educators in the area of intercultural communication. And, as outreach

coordinator for the Center for Advanced Study of International Development at Michigan State University, she was an important link between schoolteachers, the university and many professional organizations.

BONFIGLIO is active in community affairs. She is currently chair of the Community Development Act Advisory Committee which disburses over \$2 million each year to housing-related programs in the city of Kalamazoo. She is also a member of the Kalamazoo County Economic Development Corporation. **BONFIGLIO** has served on the allocations committee of the United Way and on the finance committee of Catholic Family Services. Many television viewers will recognize her from her cable access public affairs program, Public Voice.

BONFIGLIO's relationship with Western Michigan University and her doctorate in education from Michigan State University put her in a unique position to help create partnerships between businesses and area educational institutions.

How Can I Help Olga?

- Share Olga's message with neighbors, friends and co-workers.
- Volunteer time to the campaign.
- Contribute money to the campaign.

Whatever your schedule or finances will allow, your help will be appreciated. Feel free to call Olga and discuss your thoughts with her at (616) 226-8727.

If you would like to make a contribution to the campaign, please make out a check to "**Friends of OLGA BONFIGLIO**" and include your phone number on your check. Then, send the check to:

Friends of OLGA BONFIGLIO
310 Elm Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

OLGA BONFIGLIO

PERSONAL & BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

PERSONAL

- Age: 49
- Married 11 years

EDUCATION

- W. K. Kellogg Foundation National Fellow
- Ph.D., Michigan State University, Education
- M.A., Western Michigan University, Educational Leadership
- B.A., Wayne State University, English

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Chair, Community Development Act Advisory Committee, City of Kalamazoo
- Member, Kalamazoo County Economic Development Corporation
- Member, League of Women Voters
- Former member, Allocations Committee, United Way
- Former member, Finance Committee, Catholic Family Services

EMPLOYMENT

- Assistant Professor, Haworth College of Business, Western Michigan University
- Assistant Professor, School of Education, University of Michigan-Dearborn
- Outreach Coordinator for International Education, Center for Advanced Study of International Development, Michigan State University
- Consultant, Global Visions, Intercultural communication for business and education
- Instructor, Department of English, Kalamazoo Valley Community College
- Director of Community Relations, Borgess Medical Center
- Assistant to the President for Public Relations, Nazareth College

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