

## **Mike Schweinsburg's Bio Narrative**

Mike Schweinsburg has established a distinguished career, having worked successfully across the United States, Europe, and Africa in fields such as broadcasting, international shipping and trading, food supply, and transportation. Ultimately, he chose to make New York City his permanent residence and committed himself fully to advocacy, dedicating his efforts to effect meaningful change. His engagement with the 504 Democratic Club marked a turning point, providing direction and focus to his work as a disability rights activist.

Mr. Schweinsburg's contributions to the 504 Democratic Club and the disability community are notable. He assumed the role of Vice President in 2003 and, for over a decade, also served on the Board of a prominent Independent Living Center, where he organized successful fundraisers and major demonstrations for both organizations. In 2015, he organized New York City's inaugural Disability Pride Parade and played an instrumental role in establishing July as Disability Pride Month—an achievement that earned him a Mayoral Proclamation and made New York City the first municipality in the nation to grant this recognition. His ongoing advocacy continues to be referenced on the floor of Congress as he pursues national acknowledgment for Disability Pride Month.

In 2016, Mr. Schweinsburg represented the disability community as a delegate for Senator Bernie Sanders at the Democratic National Convention. Upon being elected president of the 504 Democratic Club in 2017, his initial action was to eliminate the barrier of political affiliation for membership, recognizing that disability affects individuals regardless of political party. He believed it imperative not to exclude the voices of influential leaders solely based on party registration. As a testament to this inclusive approach, the Club's current First Vice President is a Republican.

Since assuming leadership of the Club, Mr. Schweinsburg and his colleagues have actively collaborated with legislators at the federal, state, and municipal levels, including with the Public Advocate, to draft and advance legislation serving the interests of the disability community. He has held the position of Disability Rights Advisor to multiple elected officials and was the first disability activist appointed to serve on a Mayoral Transition Team. Recently, he dedicated considerable time working alongside Supreme Court Judge Suzanne Adams to design and unveil a courtroom accessible to individuals with sensory disabilities at the Supreme Court, a model intended for adoption in every county throughout New York State. Concurrently, he has co-founded a Coalition dedicated to protecting civil and human rights from the vicious attacks of the current administration. Mike has been a much sought after speaker including recently being a Guest Lecturer at Columbia University.

In summary, Mike Schweinsburg is widely recognized as one of the preeminent leaders within the disability rights community.