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(Images available upon request)

 

**Republican Congressional Candidate, Democratic Campaign Manager**

**A Story of How Two People Fell in Love across the Political Divide and Now Want to Bridge the Party Gap**

**For more info:** [mastersforcongress.com](https://www.mastersforcongress.com/)

Paoli, PA – (February, 2018) It was date two. They sat a table outdoors at a whiskey joint in center city Philadelphia, deadlocked into a stare down with minimal hopes they’d ever reach date three.

“Don’t tell me you’re a Republican,” she said.

“I’m not NOT a Republican,” Paul Masters replied, taken aback by the vehemence in her voice.

It was November of 2015, and things were already heating up as the Trump campaign picked up steam. Everything seemed to hinge on that one question – from politics to the possibility of third dates – just what was one’s position on Trump?

Having worked in the nonprofit realm for six years and been an adamant Democrat since college, the choice for Erica Minutella seemed simple. Dating a Republican in the current political climate just wasn’t an option.

Yet date three happened, and as the story goes, boy and girl met, misunderstood each other for a while, and then fell in love.

In November of 2016, they were living together in their first house when the election results came in.

They’d had endless debates since date two. And through it all – the occasional outbursts of passion, the stubborn attachments to preconceived notions – they surprised themselves with what they learned. Turns out, they very much wanted the same things (in politics as in life). It was only their perspectives that differed.

For most of 2017, Paul talked of nothing but politics. It was a subject Erica generally avoided, as she’d decided early on that politicians suck and there wasn’t much to be done about it.

“You should run for Congress,” Erica told Paul, as 2017 came to a close.

In a few days, Paul had written out a lengthy platform, with detailed policy proposals on issues like healthcare, immigration, tax reform, and money in politics, among others. Together, they built a website on a free hosting platform.

As a Social Media Consultant, Erica slipped quietly into the role of Campaign Manager, churning out press releases, filming campaign videos, and throwing a whirlwind of energy into social media channels.

They’d both decided in the beginning to emphasize ideas over fundraising. It was one of the ideals that had brought them together early on – a longing for integrity in life and in politics.

Since the decision to run for United States Congress against the Republican incumbent in the 6th district – a long-to-impossible shot – they’ve been building a grassroots campaign with the assistance of family, friends, and others looking for a different type of representative in Congress.

Paul’s platform can be found on the website mastersforcongress.com. The goal is to find workable solutions to problems: solutions that represent a rough estimate of what a compromise position between Republicans and Democrats could look like.

Issues covered on the platform include:

* Healthcare
* Immigration
* Education
* Budget and Tax Reform
* Term Limits and Money in Politics
* Energy/Environment
* Trade and Foreign Policy

Paul’s been accused of being a “Democrat” by Republican voters and being a “Republican” by Democratic voters. And yet, he continues to pursue discussions with anyone and everyone who wants to ask a question or challenge an idea. And so far, everyone has been surprised by the results.

“For the most part, there’s been misunderstanding in the beginning,” Paul said, “but then we’ve always followed that up with positive exchanges. And what we’re finding is that voters are very willing to hear you out – as long as you’re willing to hear them back.”

Throughout his candidacy, Paul will be fully accessible to voters of either party, and candidates of either party. Paul can be reached via the website, [mastersforcongress.com](https://www.mastersforcongress.com/), on social media through Facebook ([facebook.com/MastersForCongress/](https://www.facebook.com/MastersForCongress/)) and Twitter ([twitter.com/MastersForRep](https://twitter.com/MastersForRep)), and through a series of planned Facebook live streams, Sundays at 2 pm, and local events (most hosted at the home he and Erica share: see website for the changing schedule).

For now, Paul and Erica will continue to use what they’ve learned from each other to try to make the impossible happen and give everyone what they want – a voice in Congress.

The primary election date for the 6th District is May 15, 2018. The incumbent candidate for the Republican Party is Representative Ryan Costello.

**About Paul Masters:**Paul Masters grew up in the 6th District in the West Chester/Exton area.  After high school, he attended the University of Pittsburgh, graduating in 2010, whereafter he went to Navy Officer Candidate School and served for five years as an officer on destroyers. He remains an active reservist After resigning his commission, he moved back home and now lives in Paoli, PA.
**Party:** Republican

**About Erica Minutella:**
Born and raised in South Philadelphia, Erica Minutella spent her childhood immersed in imaginary worlds. She took that early fascination with the strange and unusual and directed it towards a completely impractical career path. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania's program in English Literature, she delights in slipping in nerdy pop-culture references while writing and editing for local, arts-related publications and serving as a freelance social media consultant. Her passion projects can be found in the form of fictional publications, including a short story that appeared in *The Philly Anthology (Volume 1)*, and a poetry collection, *Rejected Poetry*, published to Amazon Kindle. With a goal of eternally falling more in love with Philadelphia, she remains active as a volunteer for organizations like InLiquid Art + Design, Da Vinci Art Alliance, and Philly Makers Meetup.
**Party:** Democratic

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