



# San Gabriel Valley Examiner

Since 1997 • Published in GLEN DORA, California

A Weekly Adjudicated Publication Serving all of Los Angeles County

25 cents

Volume XXV, Issue No. 38

STRIVING FOR JOURNALISTIC EXCELLENCE IN LOCAL NEWS

September 15 - 21, 2022

## Blind Attorney and Former White House Official Certified as Candidate for West Covina City Council for District 4

**WEST COVINA** - Ollie Cantos, attorney and former Associate Director for Domestic Policy at the White House, has been certified to appear on the November 8, 2022, ballot. Cantos is the first blind Filipino-American in the history of the City ever to run for municipal office.

"This is a historic day," said former West Covina Mayor Steve Herfert. "West Covina needs someone with significant leadership experience to serve as an effective voice on the City Council and to advance priorities that are best for the City as a whole."

Cantos, 51, grew up in West Covina since he was 4. He worked in Washington, DC, for almost 20 years before coming home two years ago.

"This election is about decisively changing direction by returning our City to greater financial solvency through being better stewards of taxpayer dollars," Cantos said.

A survivor of crime from a mugging attempt three years ago, Cantos is a strong proponent of increasing the number of officers on West Covina streets to promote safety. "I know first-hand what it is like to be the victim of a crime of opportunity, and it is wrong for criminals seemingly to operate with impunity while law-abiding residents worry about their welfare as they go about their daily lives."

Cantos has worked effectively under both Republican and Democratic Administrations and has served in Federal Government positions ranging from Associate Director of the Domestic Policy Council at the White House under President George W. Bush to civil rights leadership posts at the U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education, career civil service posts held during the administrations of President Bush, President Barack Obama, President Donald Trump, and President Joe Biden.

"I am grateful for the ongoing chance to serve the American People, doing so through fostering collaboration between and among stakeholders and in a spirit of partnership based on shared interest," Cantos said.

"Ollie will be an independent voice on the Council and a positive voice for West Covina, said Don Carman a long-time resi-



Ollie Cantos

dent. "Innovative, intelligent, and resourceful, Ollie pledges to protect our neighborhoods and to be active on issues of concern to residents, businesses, and visitors to West Covina. He promises to bring transparency to the Council. His nature is to be accessible and visible around town. Communication is his strength, and residents will witness that skill with an open campaign discussing the matters of concern to residents."

fight stigmas and advance opportunities for and alongside this nation's more than 61 million Americans with disabilities.

### About Ollie Cantos

Born to Filipino-American immigrants, who came to the United States in the 1960s, Ollie has been blind since birth. Growing up was tough, especially because he was bullied in school and lacked self-confidence as a result. But, his Mom and Dad really pushed him to be independent even though he suffered from shyness and low self-esteem.

As Ollie grew older, he was mentored by a number of people along the way, each of whom had a different political perspective. These differences in outlook and opinion empowered him to blend the best of each point of view and to recognize the amazing power of collaboration.

As the direct result, Ollie has been able successfully to work in partnership with a variety of leaders, each with divergent ways of thinking on one issue or another. By finding areas of common ground, he was able to advance different initiatives including business support, civil rights, criminal justice, education, emergency preparedness, employment, government benefits, healthcare, mentoring, transportation, veterans issues, and more.

As an alumnus of Hollencrest Middle School, Bishop Amat Memorial High School, Loyola Marymount University, and Loyola Law School Los Angeles, Ollie is an attorney and nonprofit leader. His journey has taken him from non-profit staffer to the halls of power at the Federal Government level in roles at the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. Department of Education, and the White House. Working both in civil service and presidential appointee capacities, Ollie's national efforts have involved effectively getting things done under both Republican and Democratic administrations for more than 18 years.

Cantos is the adoptive father to three sons, who made international headlines by becoming the first blind triplet boys ever to earn the coveted rank of Eagle Scout. His parents and he first moved to West Covina from Los Angeles in 1974 when he was a preschooler.

For more information, please go to [olliecantos.com](http://olliecantos.com).



Undated photo of Ollie Cantos (second from right), with his sons Steven, Nick and Leo. (Credit: Ollie Cantos Facebook)

A public servant for more than 18 years, Cantos lives by the commitment to be of help wherever he can.

Involved in concurrent non-profit work for more than 32 years, including as Chairman of the Board for RespectAbility, a multi-million-dollar nonpartisan cross-disability national organization that seeks to