



December 6, 2007

Greening the DNC

The head of the Democratic National Convention Committee used a visit to Boulder on Wednesday to announce the addition of a first-ever "director of greening" to her staff.

Leah Daughtry, chief executive officer of the DNCC, introduced Andrea Robinson as the person in charge of making the convention more environmentally minded than ever.

The Democratic National Convention will be held at the Pepsi Center in Denver Aug. 25 through 28.

"We want to make the whole convention planning effort environmentally conscious," Daughtry told an audience of several hundred party loyalists at the Spice of Life Event Center in Boulder, noting that her staff was working in energy efficient office space, using hybrid-fuel vehicles, and printing on both sides of a page.

She said Robinson had played a similar role during former Vice President Al Gore's Live Earth concerts in three different cities around the world.

"We do these things because we think it's important to put our money where our mouth is," Daughtry said.

Daughtry got off to a bumpy start at the forum, forced in the first few seconds to get her geographical wits about her.

"I'm delighted to be in Denver," she said to restrained murmuring in the room.

"And in Boulder," she said after a pause.

"They're different," someone in the crowd loudly remarked.

"Yes, they are different," Daughtry said with a smile.



Photo by Paul Aiken

Leah Daughtry, Chief Executive Officer of the 2008 Democratic Convention in Denver, at right, listens to Alice Madden, Majority Leader of the Colorado State House of Representatives, answer a question during a DNCC Community Conversation at A Spice of Life Event Center on Wednesday afternoon in Boulder

With that mea culpa, Daughtry made a quick recovery and took questions from the audience on issues ranging from convention security, to bloggers, to the role of political protesters.

She assured her fellow Democrats that because the layout around the Pepsi Center is so much more open than the dense and narrow streets and alleyways of downtown Boston during the convention there four years ago, protesters likely will have a bit more freedom of movement next summer than they did in 2004.

"We're Democrats," she said. "The freedoms provided by the First Amendment are very important. We anticipate the protesters will be treated fairly."

But security around the convention remains the province of the Department of Homeland Security, the Secret Service and the Denver police, she said.

Daughtry gave a nod to the rising power of bloggers, who she described as "politically active and politically aware."

She said a greater effort was being made to include them as part and parcel of the mainstream media covering the convention.

Daughtry was joined on stage by Colorado House Majority Leader Alice Madden.

"Here in Boulder, we have a longstanding tradition of supporting the Democratic Party," Madden said. "And now, we are being presented with what is truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see history in the making."

Other local Democratic dignitaries, including Boulder County Commissioners Will Toor and Ben Pearlman, State Sens. Brandon Shaffer, D-Longmont, and Ron Tupa, D-Boulder, and several members of the Boulder City Council came out to see Daughtry speak.