

Gael of the Year

Joe Crowley

A native of Woodside, Queens and lifelong New Yorker, Joe has served the people of the Bronx and Queens in Congress since 1998. Before being elected to Congress, Joe received a bachelor's degree from Queens College, ran a successful small business for nearly a decade and represented the 30th Assembly District in the New York State legislature.

As Vice Chair of the Democratic Caucus, the fifth-highest ranking position in House Democratic Leadership, Joe's efforts in Congress are focused on building strong communities, creating jobs, increasing access to health care and housing, protecting seniors' hard-earned benefits, and opening up educational opportunities for working families.

Joe is dedicated to making the Bronx-Queens community more prosperous and secure. He established the Crime Stoppers program in 2002 to support local organizations that are working to reduce crime and improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods, and it has delivered more than \$1 million in federal funding to the Bronx-Queens community for graffiti clean-up, after-school programming, and civic patrol efforts. He is focused on further strengthening and expanding urban hospitals and specialty health centers, such as the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and Montefiore Westchester Square.

The 14th Congressional District is one of the most diverse areas in the country. Through his work with a range of local organizations, Joe has enriched his understanding of international affairs and become a leading voice in efforts to promote democracy and human rights around the world. He successfully introduced and passed legislation to honor Nobel Peace Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi with the Congressional Gold Medal for her tireless efforts to bring peace and democracy to Burma. He has also fought for women's rights both in the U.S. and overseas by introducing and spearheading the passage of the *Girls Protection Act*, legislation that prohibits the transport of minors abroad for the purpose of female genital mutilation.

Like most New Yorkers, Joe's life was profoundly changed on September 11, 2001. Tragically, his cousin, Fire Department Battalion Chief John Moran, was among the brave first responders who died that day in World Trade Center Tower 2. To make sure we never forget the sacrifices made that day Joe spearheaded an initiative to honor the first responders who lost their lives trying to help their fellow New Yorkers with a Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor. And, to ensure that New York and the nation are better prepared for future threats, Joe led efforts to create the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) which targets homeland security funding to at-risk urban centers, such as New York City.

Both local and national media have recognized Joe for his effective and impressive record of leadership in Congress. In 2010, *National Journal* magazine named Joe "a rising star" in the Democratic Caucus and *The New York Times* has noted that his peers consider him to be a "hard working representative" who is "an impassioned advocate for his district."

