

Helen Gym Bio:

City Councilmember At-Large Helen Gym (CAS '93; GSE '96) is a longtime community organizer and the first Asian American woman elected to Philadelphia's City Council. Prior to joining City Council, she was one of the leading community organizers in the city, helping establish Philadelphia as a Sanctuary City and as a parent organizer for public schools.

Seated in 2016, Helen leads a human rights agenda rooted in housing, education, and racial and economic justice. In her time on Council, she helped end the 17-year state takeover of the Philadelphia schools and restored nurses, counselors, music programs, and safe drinking water to every public school; established a tenant legal defense fund, right to counsel law, and a mandatory pre-filing diversion program for renters facing eviction – which have been heralded by the Biden White House as national models; and expanded labor rights by establishing a permanent Office of Labor and passing groundbreaking legislation such as advance scheduling and right to return laws. As Chair of the Committee on Children and Youth, she has led an aggressive agenda to reform juvenile justice systems and youth residential facilities, including shutting down three of Pennsylvania's largest providers due to abuse of children in their care.

Helen is the co-chair of Local Progress, a national network of more than 1,000 progressive municipally elected officials, where she chairs LP's work on economic justice, Sanctuary Cities and school board support. Helen has been named the *Philadelphia Inquirer's* Citizen of the Year and was the 2017 EMILY's List national "Rising Star" winner for women in politics. She is a second generation Korean American and mom to three children, including an incoming Penn student.