

# Evans brings wide-ranging experience to newest job

In many ways, Rep. Geri Evans (DFL-New Brighton) typifies what is already proving to be a remarkable class of first-term representatives.



Rep. Geri Evans

Like many of her first-term colleagues, it's hard to make the "novice" label stick given her lengthy resumé of public service. And like most of her peers, she views the task of making policy with a sense of vocation.

"I have a strong belief that public policy should be elevated in the general public's mind," she said. "But in order to do that, public policy-makers have to do two things — make better public policy and do a much better job of communicating that to the public."

"I think we could do a better job on both," she said.

Evans brings to her new job a background hard to match among her colleagues, first-termers or otherwise. "You name a field, I've probably been in it," she quipped.

She's taught school at every possible level, from nursery school to teaching graduate level courses in small business and personnel admin-

istration. She's put those business theories to work as a business consultant and in marketing.

Evans served two terms on the St. Anthony-New Brighton School Board, including a stint as chairwoman. She currently works as an education equity consultant, working with school districts around the state to ensure students get the same quality of education regardless of gender, cultural background or physical disabilities.

Tack on lobbying and newspaper work, and the list is almost finished. Evans is also studying for her doctorate degree in educational administration.

And she's also raised two children, who mirror her involvement in issues.

Evans' background naturally leads to concern about education issues, but changes buffeting her district have made economic development and housing a priority as well.

Having run for her seat in both 1990 and 1992, Evans noted a stark contrast between the elections in her constituents' concern for the economy.

"It [the economy] was very much out there," she said of last fall's election. "It convinced me I'd better ask to be involved in economic development, housing, things like that — because

my district was reflecting that downturn in the economy."

There's a dawning reality that staid suburbs like New Brighton and Mounds View will be grappling with issues traditionally viewed as belonging only to the inner city.

"Poverty is galloping right out to us . . . and we're not ready for it," Evans said.

The group of 34 new representatives is already making their presence felt, she added. "We certainly are a force to be contended with."

"I suspect that we're older than the average crop of first-termers," she said. ". . . And we have a great diversity of experience."

—Jim Anderson

## District 52B

**Population:** 32,877

**Distribution:** 100 percent in urbanized areas

**County:** Ramsey

**Largest City:** New Brighton

**Location:** north Metro

**1992 presidential election results:**

Clinton/Gore: 44.3 percent

Bush/Quayle: 32.1 percent

Perot/Stockdale: 22.9 percent

Other: 0.7 percent