

“Racial remarks stunned the audience”

This headline described my comments at the recent League of Women Voters and NAACP forum. I would like to apologize if my statements offended anyone in the audience and in my community.

I realize that my words generalized a small segment of my neighbors and I regret the inferences that it created. That was certainly not my intent.

My comments were intended to initiate a conversation which could lead to solutions for not only African-American youth anticipating college, but youth in general. As an elected official it is my intent to build real educational opportunities, for everyone of all races and gender, not just applicants for admission to the University of Illinois.

I have a strong background of involvement in minority communities, and know first hand the challenges many minority youth face. While I was training for the ministry, I served in the trenches working with two inner city Los Angeles churches. I saw first hand the impact that street crime, gangs, and restricted job opportunities had on minority youth.

I have plans to change this, to bring solutions, and I am outraged that I am being labeled a racist. Nothing could be further from the truth. I have dedicated my life to building bridges for all people and to improve the quality of life for all mankind.

I was speaking from my heart, and although in hindsight I would have worded my statement differently, I am, and have always been strongly committed to the American dream for everyone, including

African American youth. I remain committed to solutions and will continue working on behalf of all citizens of our district.

As a Navy Corpsman for 20 years, I put my life on the line in service for my country, for everyone in my country, red, yellow, black, or white.

I am in this race to create real solutions for Danville, the 52nd District and Illinois and not to shy away or gloss over difficult issues and discussions as we've seen too often from professional politicians. Again I regret if my comments were offensive to anyone as that was not my intent.

Al Reynolds, Republican Candidate for the 52nd Senate seat.