NEW ASSEMBLYMAN Mark Gjonaj gives blood at North Central Bronx Hospital.

Gjonaj Takes Office

Mark Gjonaj, the new Assemblyman in the 80th District, which includes parts of Norwood, Bedford Park and Morris Park, held his unofficial swearing-in ceremony at Christopher Columbus High School on Sunday, Jan. 13.

Clocking in at more than three hours in length, Gjonaj said he wanted to give everyone who supported his campaign an opportunity to share in the moment during the ceremony. In addition to the long roster of elected officials, ambassadors from Albania and Kosovo also attended the ceremony. Gjonaj said he understands that he might be the only person of Albanian descent to be elected to state office.

The next day, on Monday, Gjonaj took a bus full of family and friends up to Albany to share in his official swearing-in. He was hoping to ride back with everyone, but was forced to spend the night upstate as Governor Cuomo pushed hard for both the assembly and the senate to pass new gun control legislation, which they did.

On Thursday, Gjonaj was at North Central Bronx Hospital in Norwood, giving blood in a mobile van. One of Gjonaj's plans is to buy an RV and turn it into a mobile district office.

"If people can't come to the district office," Gjonaj said," then we need to bring the office to them."