

2020 Endorsement Questionnaire South County

Email address *

bennylee.oroloma@gmail.com

APA Democratic Caucus of Alameda County



PLEASE COMPLETE AND SUBMIT BY SEPT. 9, midnight. Please take time to review the questions before filling in the boxes since you cannot save the responses for later completion. Thank you for your interest in being considered for an endorsement by the Asian Pacific American Democratic Caucus of Alameda County. Please answer each question in 250 words or less. Be honest and direct. Please note: your questionnaire will be posted on our website for Caucus members and the public to review.

Personal Information

Candidate Name *

Benny Lee

City and zip code of residence.

San Leandro 94579

What is your campaign website address?

www.bennylee.us

What is your campaign email address?

bennylee.oroloma@gmail.com

What is the office that you are seeking? *

- City of San Leandro City Council
- City of San Leandro School Board
- City of Hayward City Council
- City of Hayward, Unified School District Trustee
- City of Fremont, Mayor
- City of Fremont, City Council, Dist. 1
- City of Fremont, City Council, Dist. 5
- City of Fremont, City Council, Dist. 6
- City of Fremont, Unified School District, Dist. 1
- City of Fremont, Unified School District, Dist. 4
- City of Fremont, Unified School District, Dist. 5
- City of Union City, Mayor
- City of Union City, City Council
- New Haven School Trustee, Area 1
- New Haven School Trustee, Area 2
- New Haven School Trustee, Area 3
- City of Newark, Mayor
- City of Newark, City Council
- City of Newark, School Board
- City of Newark, School Board, Short term
- Eden Healthcare District
- Washington Hospital Healthcare District
- Oro Loma Sanitary District

Ohlone Community College

Alameda County Water District

AD 20, State Assembly Representative

AD 25, State Assembly Representative

Ohlone Community College, Area 2

Other:

Are you the incumbent?

Yes

No

Are you a registered Democrat? The APA Democratic Caucus can only endorse registered Democrats

Yes

No

How long have you been a registered Democrat? If less than 5 years, please explain your reason for becoming a Democrat.

9 years. I've voted Democrat so it made sense to change from NPP.

Are you an APA Caucus member?

Yes

No

Why are you seeking the Caucus's endorsement?

Yes.
.....

List ONLY the top 5 endorsements that you have received. (Please reference your website if you want to alert us to more).

Fremont Mayor Lily Mei,
Hayward Councilmember Aisha Wahab,
San Leandro Councilmember Victor Aguilar Jr.,
Oro Loma Sanitary District Director Fred Simon,
Community Organizer Bryan Azevedo
.....

If we endorse you, will you use our name in your campaign materials?

Yes

No

Maybe

How long have you lived in the district which you are seeking to represent?

20+ years
.....

Educational background: What schools have you attended, date graduated, major and degree(s) earned.

SFSU, August 1990, Bachelors of Science Business Admin - Statistics and Market Research

Employment: List the last three (3) paid positions, indicating name of employer, job title, and length of employment.

County of San Mateo, Director of SMC Public Wi-Fi, 5 years.

TeraRecon, Sr. Business Systems Analyst, 2 years.

East West Bank, V.P. Data Management Officer, 6 years.

What are the names of any community or nonprofit organizations with which you have been an active volunteer in the past 3-5 years.

APAPA Greater Oakland Chapter / East Bay

Asian Community Cultural Association of San Leandro

Bethel Church Food Bank

CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

1. What differentiates you from your opponents for the elected office that you are seeking?

I have a background in data management, business intelligence, and technology innovation. These skill sets have been used in my Council role that has incorporated new tools that has transformed the way the Council now makes decisions because it measures direct short to long term fiscal impacts. I've been a driver of innovation for the City of San Leandro which includes movement towards Public Wi-Fi, e-learning and Internet of Things which has brought innovation and have transformed our business live, work and play eco-system - the free Public Wi-Fi has had a profound impact to the underserved populations in light of Covid-19 challenges. My day job for the County of San Mateo is in this subject matter where we've applied innovative technologies in our County projects including water treatment facilities in hard to reach rural areas that have improved efficiencies while serving as usable facilities by the residents for Public Wi-Fi access - usage of the free Wi-Fi services has increased during the Covid-19 Shelter in Place order at these facilities.

2. Describe one issue for the district you want to represent for which you have provided leadership and about which you are passionate.

Climate Change. We've all felt the impacts since the inception of the 21st century and the wildfires in the past three years serves as proof of the growing challenges we have ahead. Applying innovative technologies will save and reallocate staff time to improvements that will work to address these challenges. The Waste Water Treatment is a vital service to maintain the health of our water resources but we need to start working on water conservation, reclamation and reuse as our populations have grown significantly every decade. Oro Loma has an education program that works well educating our youth and public but more needs to be done to lead in multi-agency cooperation to collaborate on the climate change battle.

3. What percentage of the district you [or intend to] represent are of APA heritage?

Oro Loma involves wholes or parts of each of the following jurisdictions with these API % as of the latest 5 year ACS: San Leandro 33.0%, San Lorenzo 23.8%, Ashland CDP 19.9%, and Hayward 27.6%

4. Please identify the three largest APA ethnicities in your district.

Chinese, Filipino, Viet-nameese

5. Please identify the most at-risk APA community in your district and explain why.

Non-english speaking Chinese. Oro Loma covers more of the lower cost housing areas in San Leandro, Ashland CDP, San Lorenzo CDP, and Hayward which has seen a greater growth of non-English speaking Chinese residents. In a study conducted and produced in the City of San Leandro, the non-English Speaking Chinese populations were regarded as the lowest income and most underserved as compared to other ethnic populations. This is likely due to language service challenges, awareness, and cultural issues. With new environmental regulations surfacing on refuse separation and reclamation, language services must be addressed for non-English speaking Chinese and other non-English speaking sub-groups as enforcement fees and fines will be disruptive to their livelihoods.

6. List the three top concerns of members of the APAs in your district.

Public Safety, Health, and Services. All of these have been heavily impacted during the Covid-19 new normal and post-George Floyd era.

7. During the COVID-19 pandemic, reports of anti-Asian verbal and physical attacks have arisen. If you are the incumbent, how have you addressed this? If you are a candidate how will you address this?

I have been addressing this through multiple channels. First, my current role as San Leandro Councilmember where I've brought this issue to the forefront and have moved the Council to a "Proclamation Proclaiming the City of San Leandro United Against Racism and Xenophobia During the COVID-19 Pandemic". Second, I've addressed this at a national level with my role on the National League of Cities Race Equity and Leadership Council educating other Councils nationally and have recorded videos and blogs discussing solutions on this matter. Third, advocacy from my role as an APAPA GOC Boardmember speaking on these matters and contributing on Covid-19 PPE distribution to our front-line workers.

8. Do you believe that Asian and Pacific Americans are adequately represented in local government? What can elected officials do to improve participation?

No. I'm the first and last Councilmember of API ancestry on San Leandro's 7 member Council in a city where the 5yr ACS API percentage is 33% and there are no API candidates running for any Council seats. The Oro Loma Sanitary District Board covers wholes and parts of 4 different municipal/CDP jurisdictions of which the average API population is greater than 25% but this board has never had an API representative. The APA Democratic Caucus was instrumental 4 years ago in addressing the racist comments of Oro Loma Boardmember Laython Landis but we've not seen any APIs running for this seat since. With the large underserved non-English speaking API constituency, we need to ensure that they are also represented and we need a leader who understands the diverse intricacies of the non-English speaking. Having grown up in these communities and having addressed these issues in San Leandro as Councilmember, I have the fortitude to do the same with Oro Loma Sanitary District Board.

9. Please identify all Asian Pacific American candidates whom you have personally endorsed over the past 5 years including this election cycle. If there are none, please explain.

John Chiang for Governor, Kamala Harris for US Senate, Betty Yee for Controller, Fiona Ma for Treasurer, Rob Bonta for Assembly, Kansen Chu for Assembly, Sheng Thao for Oakland City Council, Aisha Waha for Hayward City Council, Lily Mei for Fremont Mayor, Arun Goel for Dublin Mayor

Richard Chennault for San Leandro Unified School District - while he's not Asian, his family legacy should be noted as he's the Great Grandson of Major General Claire Lee Chennault who loved the Chinese people and formed the Flying Tigers in WWII that turned the tide of the war against the Imperial Japanese Army.

10. If you were faced with a situation that involved an Asian Pacific American community, would you seek consultation with our Caucus as a resource?

Yes

No

Thank you for completing our questionnaire.

Please submit your responses by Sept. 9, 2020 midnight. Our South County Endorsement Meeting is scheduled for Sat., Sept. 20 from 1 to 3 pm on Zoom. Only those candidates submitting the questionnaire on time will be on our endorsement ballot. No changes to your responses can be made after it is submitted.

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms