

# 2020 Endorsement Questionnaire

Email address \*

deborah@deborahforberkeley.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 \*

Deborah Matthews

City and zip code of residence.

Berkeley, 94703

What is your campaign website address?

deborahforberkeley.com

What is your campaign email address?

deborah@deborahforberkeley.com

What is the office that you are seeking? \*

- Alameda City Council
- Alameda School Board
- Berkeley, Mayor
- Berkeley, City Council, Dist. 2
- Berkeley, City Council, Dist. 3
- Berkeley, City Council, Dist. 5
- Berkeley, City Council, Dist. 6
- Berkeley, Unified School District Trustee
- Berkeley, Rent Stabilization Board
- Oakland, City Council, Dist. 1
- Oakland, City Council, Dist. 3
- Oakland, City Council, Dist. 5
- Oakland, City Council, Dist. 7
- Oakland, City Council, At-large
- Oakland City Attorney
- Oakland USD, School Trustee, Dist. 1
- Oakland USD, School Trustee, Dist. 3
- Oakland USD, School Trustee, Dist. 5
- Oakland USD, School Trustee, Dist. 7
- AC Transit, Bd. of Directors, Ward 1
- AC Transit, Bd. of Directors, Ward 2
- AC Transit Bd. of Directors, At-Large
- EB Regional Park Dist. Bd. of Directors. Ward 1

Regional Council, Bd. of Directors, Area 1

AD 15, State Assembly Representative

AD 18, State Assembly Representative

Peralta Community College District, Bd. of Director, 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.

Lifetime .....

Are you an APA Caucus member?

Yes

No

Why are you seeking the Caucus's endorsement?

Historically, South Berkeley has been a community flourishing with influences from Asian and African American culture and experiences. Yet, our community, homeownership, and demographics have changed over recent years. This has created a situation where new residents attempted a push to end the community Sunday meals hosted by our Thai Buddhist Temple. These community meals bring a broad and diverse gathering of people together to share meals and conversations each week, for more than forty years. I have always been a strong political advocate to keep the Wat Mongkolratanaram Buddhist Temple Sunday communal breakfast open in South Berkeley. I firmly believe we must advocate to celebrate cultural and ethnic traditions within our community. While both African and Asian American communities have certainly faced similar experiences with discrimination, solidarity between us is critical. Especially now, during COVID-19, where we see a rise in blatant racism is plaguing our Asian and Pacific American communities. I believe diversity and inclusion must be the core principle within politics and community, and I am committed to working to understand and represent all Asian Pacific cultural communities within Berkeley. The APA Democratic Caucus of Alameda County is currently serving as a leading voice for the Asian Democratic community, and I am ready to work in solidarity to ensure united, inclusive equity in South Berkeley and citywide. I will seek and support the representation of Asian and Pacific Americans on local boards and commissions, ensuring their expertise and decision-making skills in public policy are represented in Berkeley.

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

South Berkeley Now! (steering committee), the Berkeley Democratic Club, the honorable city councilwoman Susan Wengraf, UC Berkeley former Vice-Chancellor Dorothy Walker, founder of the Daily KOS (world renowned political blog) Markos Moulatis.

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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?

I have been a Berkeley resident of district 8 for forty years.

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

I attended Ohio State University, as a political science major for three years but did not graduate. I have also been a real estate broker through the State of California Department of Real Estate, since 1992.

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

I currently am a real estate broker and consultant for the Broker Reality Group, where I have been employed since 1991. I also have been employed by San Pablo Investors Two LLC, since 2018 as a community engagement consultant.

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

Ashby Village (senior engaging experiences), Deborah Spotlight community blog, West Berkeley International Marketplace, Oakland and the World Enterprises (low-income housing developer).

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

There are quite a few differences between my opponent and I. Most importantly, I am dedicated to honor the trust of South Berkeley voters to serve my full-term in office, uninterrupted, while my opponent sought and ran for a higher office after just four months after being elected to service south Berkeley. I have been a committed resident of Berkeley for forty years, while my opponent has resided here for less than ten years. One of the main priorities of my campaign involves delivering housing to homeless, low, and middle-income residents, something which my opponent has not addressed in the past four years. I have a strong stance on the issue of gun violence in South Berkeley, while my opponent again, does not. I am passionate about delivering reinvestment within our community (which has not been delivered in more than 50 years), while my opponent does not convey the same passion. I will continue to support our small businesses while addressing the needs of newly established ones within South Berkeley, something I am not confident my opponent has addressed as our council member. My opponent has failed to address the emergency need for advanced pedestrian and cyclist safety, slower streets, safer walkways, and better lighting, which I believe is crucial.

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

One issue I have provided substantial leadership towards, and one which I am greatly passionate about is that of housing for everyone. As the cofounder of South Berkeley Now! I have spent the past two years working to deliver equitable and sustainable housing at the Ashby Bart station and supported the efforts for housing at the North Berkeley Bart Station. South Berkeley Now! is a grassroots organization funded entirely by our committee members, advocating mercilessly for housing, equity, diversity, and reinvestment into South Berkeley. Among other missions we "support higher-density housing development for all income levels along our transit corridors... and insist the city develops a well-funded program to provide assistance to South Berkeley residents in danger of displacement..." South Berkeley Now! is led entirely through community organizing, as we move housing forward for homeless, low, and middle-income residents. There are many hurdles we must overcome in regards to housing initiatives including; funding sources, delays in planning and project approvals, community engagement and buy-in, and obviously COVID-19. Yet, we have gathered more than 1,200 signatures to support this transit-oriented development, and the Ashby Bart housing development is currently atop of the Bart transit agency's list for short-term development plans in Berkeley! I am thrilled with our organization's work alongside South Berkeley community members to collaborate on such a vital issue.

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

About 11%.

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

Chinese, Indian, and Korean.

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

I believe the entire APA community in our district is currently at risk due to the pandemic. America, and California specifically, have seen and continue to see how COVID-19 disproportionately impacts communities and people of color. Including, Asian and Pacific Americans who experience a heightened fatality rate from COVID-19. Tragically, the pandemic has also brought about a rise in racist biases, language, rhetoric, and hate crimes towards Asian and Pacific Americans. This racism must be addressed immediately, and all of Berkeley must stand in solidarity with our APA community. It is crucial that we continue supporting our Asian and Pacific American owned businesses, publicly acknowledge this blatant racism, and stand in inclusive solidarity with our APA-community both in South Berkeley, and globally.

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

The top three concerns of APA community members in my district include; access to sustainable and affordable housing, education equity, and lack of support for APA-owned small businesses. All of these concerns are often accompanied with and enhanced through racism towards our APA communities, which again has been on the rise with COVID-19. As a political activist I have worked to build positive relations with our South Berkeley long-term Asian business owners such as those at the Fat Fish and Karala Japanese cuisine.

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 will without a doubt address the verbal and physical attacks impacting our Asian and Pacific American communities in South Berkeley. I fully recognize the reality that racism towards our APA communities is alive, and on the rise specifically due to rhetoric and biases surrounding the pandemic. We must encourage all communities of color within South Berkeley to come together and stand in solidarity with our APA communities. Accurate and transparent information regarding these racist attacks, biases, and rhetorics must be available for all, and we must educate the entirety of our community on this often overlooked racism. I believe this and all racism must be blatantly addressed within our school districts as well, to ensure total community solidarity, while confirming our children have a concrete understanding. We must engage our entire community at large, while acknowledging the vital importance of continuing to support APA-owned businesses, organizations, and cultural centers. I, like many, believe silence is compliance.

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

I do not believe that Asian and Pacific Americans are adequately represented in local government. It is only through this participation that we can ensure Asian and Pacific American rights are enhanced and protected. To improve participation our local government must directly address the needs of our Asian and Pacific American communities. Including but certainly not limited to addressing education, workplace, and housing discrimination. For the non-English proficient members of our community it is also crucial we provide language services to not only assist these community members, but to enhance voting participation and APA representation in local government. If elected I plan to ensure thoughtful inclusion of Asian historical legacies in South Berkeley, such as that of my former community colleague whom we sadly miss, Maggie Gee. South Berkeley must work to enhance Asian and Pacific American voting participation and representation while demonstrating a passion for solidarity across the entire South Berkeley community.

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.

I have personally endorsed Phong La, for Alameda county assessor. Betty Yee, for California State Controller. Jenny Wong, for city of Berkeley auditor. Fiona Ma, for California State Treasurer.

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 North County Endorsement Meeting is scheduled for Thu., Sept. 24 beginning at 6:30 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.

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