

# 2020 Endorsement Questionnaire East County

Email address \*

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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 \*

Mari Mendonca

City and zip code of residence.

Berkeley 94705

What is your campaign website address?

berkeleyrentboard.org

What is your campaign email address?

marimendoncarentboard2020@gmail.com

What is the office that you are seeking? \*

- City of Dublin Mayor
- City of Dublin City Council
- City of Dublin, Unified School District Trustee, Area 1
- City of Dublin, Unified School District Trustee, Area 4
- City of Livermore, Mayor
- City of Livermore, City Council, Dist. 3
- City of Livermore, Unified School District
- City of Pleasanton, Mayor
- City of Pleasanton, City Council
- City of Pleasanton, Unified School District Trustee
- AC Board of Supervisors, District 1
- AD 16, State Assembly Representative
- Other: City of Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board

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.

I had always been registered as a Democrat since the time I was of voting age; but to be honest I had found myself discouraged at different political moments as I observed a certain kind of culture within "Party politics". I noticed that a compartmentalizing and simplification of issues were being used by party's to "out campaign" or gain popularity while real work and significant systemic changes that are at the core of our problems continued to stay the same. I kind of pulled away until Bernie, and then as I witnessed the disingenuousness with which he was ousted in the last campaign; I pulled away again but when he decided to run again I returned.

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Are you an APA Caucus member?

Yes

No

Why are you seeking the Caucus's endorsement?

My application to be considered for endorsement is about reaching out and connecting with other constituencies in order to build community solidarity around important issues. The more that different community members come together in solidarity the more power we can harness to create vital and significant changes.

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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).

Berkeley Tenants Convention, ACCE, SEIU 1021, Our Revolution, East Bay Young Democrats (see more: [berkeleyrentboard.org](http://berkeleyrentboard.org))

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 was born and raised in Berkeley, attended Berkeley schools and graduated from Berkeley High School. I was displaced in the early 90's (a single mother of 2 at the time) due to an increase in housing cost then. I was only able to return after over a 10yr wait on the Section 8 wait list. I have been back and living in my district for going on 10yrs.

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

Contra Costa College (AA '92), Academy of Art University BFA ('05)

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

Berkwood Hedge School (Groundskeeper 2yrs), 1-800 Flowers (Delivery Driver 2yrs), Hyatt House Emeryville (Night Auditor 8yrs)

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

Friends of Adeline

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## CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

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

I am a Berkeley native. I have always been a tenant living below the poverty line and am currently a Section 8 recipient. I am a single parent of four ages 14-32. I have experienced homelessness and displacement as well as being on a housing voucher. I represent a missing voice and perspective that is not typically "at the table". My family is multiracial and live the daily reality of systemic oppression that is the result of global white supremacy.

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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 of the biggest issues in our City is housing. The housing issue encompasses everything from the unhoused, to displacement by the predatory nature of our economy as well as gentrification and institutionalized racism, predatory receiverships, predatory probate courts and overall systemic injustice. As a member of Friends of Adeline we have successfully assisted our community member from losing his home of over 40+ years. We have defended South Berkeley from outright "Colonization" and we are still actively fighting this fight. I have been appointed to the Housing Advisory Commission and am a member of the Community Advisory Group for the BART developments at Ashby and North Berkeley BART Stations. I was recently appointed to the Rent Stabilization Board to fulfil the term of fellow activist Christina Murphy and have been actively challenging the limitations of our current "framework" on housing to create better outcomes.

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

About 10-20%

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

Korean, Chinese and Philipino. Before the Japanese internment happend we had many more Japanese.

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

I do not want to claim that I currently know the most at-risk APA community in my district because I don't. I think it is important to be honest about that. I know that I was born with an extremely distinct passion for people and humanity. I also know that my life experience and hardships as well as my own family's marginalized lived experience has given me the energy, passion and heart to fight alongside of all people. I am and will continue to be a partner with the community open to learn and to listen to and fight for what is needed as defined by our community members in order to achieve stability and justice for everyone.

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

Housing security/affordability, health care and support services, accessability to resources and information, strong community and cultural connections.

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 was only recently appointed to the Board on which I serve and have not been in a space where anyone has spoke to the issue of COVID-19 in this way; however I will always stand up against racism and any other "ism". I do not have any fear of addressing difficult subject matter or unjust ideals, thinking or policies.

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

Asian and Pacific Americans are not adequately represented in local or even national government. We are still in a white dominated, power, political and economic constructed society. Elected officials should participate more directly with all constituencies in the community this would help nurture the specific voices of each to have a stronger voice within the community. Good leadership is all about empowering the 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 actually have really only become extremely politically active within the last 5 years (being a single parent of 4 with no political upbringing made it out of reach and beyond my capacity) I started with becoming a member of Friends of Adeline (friendsofadeline.org) in order to "Think globally" by "acting locally". In that time I supported fellow Rent Board Commissioner James Chang as Chair of our Outreach Committee as well as his run for the Democratic Party Central Committee. I am also currently endorsing Candidate Wayne Hsiung for Mayor of Berkeley.

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 East County Endorsement Meeting is scheduled for Thu., Sept. 17 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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