

2024 Central Committee Questionnaire

We expect the responses to be based on each candidate's individual lived experience.

Email *

ddelfinpolk@gmail.com

Basic Information

Endorsement Questionnaire



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 to review. Caucus members attending our Endorsement meeting on January 13 will be provided a ballot to vote. Only candidates who have submitted their completed questionnaire will be listed on the ballot. Questionnaires must be submitted by December 28 at 5 PM.

Personal Information

Candidate Name *

Dyana Delfin Polk

City and zip code of residence. *

Berkeley, CA 94709

What is your campaign website address?

What is your campaign email address? *

ddelfinpolk@gmail.com

What is the office that you are seeking? *

- Central Committee AD 14
- Central Committee AD 16
- Central Committee AD 18
- Central Committee AD 20
- Central Committee AD 24

Are you an incumbent? *

- Yes
- No

Are you a registered Democrat? *

Yes

No

Are you on a slate? If so, please identify. *

Democrats for Affordable Housing

Are you an APA Caucus member? *

Yes

No

Why are you seeking the Caucus's endorsement? *

I am seeking the endorsement of the Caucus because the Caucus represents a significant and important community within AD14 and the basis of my candidacy for central committee is to bring more representation to the Party as well as the substantial experience I would bring to our Party. While I have not been an official member of the Caucus, I have worked closely with many members and leaders of the Caucus through my work as a Peralta Colleges Trustee and current associate of the central committee. I always have striven to be an ally to the AAPI community and will continue to do so in this and every capacity.

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

Yes

No

Maybe

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

I have lived in my current neighborhood for 17 years, I grew up in West Berkeley, left to attend high school in the Central Valley and returned to Berkeley permanently in 2006. My grandparents moved to Berkeley in 1971 and our family has resided in Berkeley ever since. I have very deep roots in this community and proud to be a third generation Berkeley resident.

Please list what experiences most qualify you to serve on the Central Committee (e.g., education, work, volunteer, life experiences, political campaigns) *

Dyana Marie Delfín Polk is a third-generation Latina, community college graduate, public education advocate and political organizer. Dyana served as Associate Executive Director at HOMEY, a violence prevention nonprofit serving Latinx and African American youth in San Francisco's Mission District. After seven years of service at HOMEY, Dyana served as a legislative aide (and proud member of SEIU 1021) in the Berkeley Mayor's office working on education, health policy, public safety and labor issues. She is currently a community engagement consultant for The Unity Council in Oakland as well as a policy aide for Oakland District 6 Councilmember Kevin Jenkins.

In addition to her nonprofit experience, she is also a seasoned campaign consultant for city council and school board candidates in Alameda, Contra Costa and Marin Counties. Some of her clients include: Tessa Rudnick and Gabriel Quinto, El Cerrito City Council, Kate Harrison, Berkeley City Council, District 4, Dianne Martinez and Scott Donahue, Emeryville City Council and Jean Walsh, AC Transit, Ward 2, Courtney Welch for Emeryville City Council, Carolina Martin for San Rafael School Board, Area 4, and Eli Hill for San Rafael City Council, District 2. Working with women, LGBTQ+ and candidates of color is a particular focus of Dyana's work in politics. Dyana is also an elected official representing Area 6 on the Peralta Community College District Board of Trustees. Public education is a passion for Dyana and she's excited to continue working with her colleagues and Peralta community to fulfill the potential in all of our students.

Born on Mather Air Force Base in Sacramento County, Dyana was raised in Merced and in Berkeley, California in a Mexican-American family. Her parents are both union members (AFL-CIO/CSEA & SEIU 1021) and continue to inspire Dyana to fight hard for working families. She received her Associate's degree from Merced College, Bachelor's Degree in American History and Chicano Studies from UC Berkeley and her Master's degree in Public Policy from Mills College. Along with other Latinx young people, Dyana also co-founded the Latino Young Democrats of the East Bay. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Multicultural Institute, a West Berkeley-based organization who works with immigrant day laborers, domestic workers and youth in search of economic opportunity.

CANDIDATE QUESTIONS - Central Committee

1. What percentage of the district in which you are running are of APA heritage? And what are top three Asian ethnic groups? *

Berkeley makes up the majority of voters for AD14, around 18% are AAPI. The top three groups, in order, are from China, India, and Other Asian communities. The city of Berkeley is 20.9% AAPI, and Oakland, which is 15.8% Asian, represents a smaller section of AD14 due to redistricting.

2. Asian Americans are the fastest growing population in Alameda County and are in the majority in three cities. While the majority are Democrats, a growing number are registering as No Party Preference. How can the Central Committee be more relevant to these communities? *

The Latine community, of which I belong, has a very similar challenge of having many residents register NPP rather than Democrat. I believe this to be a lack of education and outreach to communities of color in general from the Democratic Party, and lack of attention to immigrant communities in particular from the Party. It is a huge opportunity as we approach a Presidential election year to use this platform and the resources that we bring as members of these communities to bring more voter education and outreach to communities of color. In addition, our central committee and Democratic Party materials are in English only. As a member of the Board of Trustees for the Peralta Community College District (and someone who is bilingual and bicultural), I've heavily advocated for materials to be translated (I've been successful in this), and will bring that advocacy to the central committee. I believe language access to be of the utmost importance not just in how we conduct meetings, but the outreach materials we use and the avenues by which we outreach to community members. There is much work to do in ensuring that we register more voters as Democrat, but this would be my starting point as a central committee member.

3. List three ways in which you could help the CC promote a greater awareness of issues of concern to the A/PA communities and support greater representation on elected bodies. *

I believe strongly that no one can represent us better than ourselves. I would start by engaging members of the AAPI community, such as chambers of commerce, the APA Dem Caucus, and other active community members to hear from you all on what is important to the communities that you represent. There is a huge disconnect between the central committee and the community in general and I believe it is to the detriment of the AAPI community as well as other communities of color and a contributing reason for this is lack of communication. Second, regularly engaging with AAPI elected officials and commissioners to foster ongoing policy advocacy efforts and opportunities within the cities that we represent through standing meetings and relationship building with staff. We have elected leaders who we can engage to help shape the way the central committee advocates for issues that are actually relevant to the community and will make a difference for the folks that we represent. Third, we need culturally relevant and impactful training programs that will build a bench for the next generation of leaders. I co-founded the Latino (now Latine) Young Democrats of the East Bay because there was a lack of advocacy towards the issues that we cared about as a community. With the right leadership, the central committee can be the place where teach young people to advocate in a culturally relevant and sensitive way, especially in light of the rise in hate crimes towards community members, the AAPI community in particular.

4. Please name local Asian American candidates the Central Committee has endorsed in the past 10 years. *

Mayor Sheng Thao, Oakland, Janani Ramachandran, Oakland, Reichi Lee, Berkeley School Board, Alfred Twu, AC Transit among others.

5. Proposing and adopting resolutions is one of the main functions of the CC. Some of the resolutions over the past several years impacted members of the APA communities. Please comment on what you think of those resolutions. *

* Incumbents - response is required.

I think resolutions can have such an impact, particularly because it shows what our values are and what we stand for as Democrats. However, in recent history, resolutions (specifically through the CC), have not been as a result of consultation or engagement with community members. This is a dangerous practice and excludes community from a process that should rightfully include them. We have to change the way we structure these resolutions to make sure that we have community involved in the way we write and pass them. This is one of the main reasons why I am running for CC.

6. Do you believe that the vetting process for Resolutions is adequate? Please explain your response. *

I do not think the vetting process is adequate. As an associate to the CC currently, I've observed the way that resolutions are vetted and passed, and it is done through a smaller group of members in committee before it goes to the full CC, which is typical for any CC. However, it is the lack of communication with community members to have any input that makes this process inadequate. There isn't any opportunity, other than CC members actually engaging with leaders one on one, for groups like the APA Dem Caucus to review language or provide context and information. As part of the resolution process, we need to change the way we are structuring the resolution process to allow for community groups to be a part of the process. Having one member of a club on the CC which we currently have, is not working. We need to expand this as part of the structure itself, which would require electing CC members who are willing to work with leadership to do so.

7. How impactful have the past resolutions been on the quality of life for low-income Alameda County residents? *

I do not think that the resolutions passed have increased quality of life for low income residents of our County because there is lack of meaningful communication between the community and the CC, in other words, no one knows about these resolutions in the community. In addition, the issues that our residents care most about, affordable housing, homelessness, public safety, protecting public education, these are not the issues that the CC is focusing on. We need to get back to our original mission of electing Democrats and developing a platform of issues that directly impact Alameda County residents, with proper community input. That happens at the ballot box, by electing CC members such as myself who will bring the attention of the CC back to Alameda County and the major challenges that we have to tackle here and to elect Democrats who will help solve these challenges.

Thank you for completing our questionnaire.

Please submit your responses by Dec. 28, 5 pm. Our Zoom Endorsement Meeting is scheduled for January 13 beginning at 10 am. Only those candidates completing the questionnaire will be on our endorsement ballot. No changes to your responses can be made after it is submitted.

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