

2024 Central Committee Questionnaire

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

Email *

james4berkeley@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 *

James Chang

City and zip code of residence. *

Berkeley, 94703

What is your campaign website address?

http://james.vote

What is your campaign email address? *

james4berkeley@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. *

Yes, _____

Are you an APA Caucus member? *

Yes

No

Why are you seeking the Caucus's endorsement? *

As a member of the API Committee and the APA Democratic Caucus, I have always believed that Asian Pacific Islanders need to band together to have a unified voice to be seen as an emerging, vocal, and powerful voting block that counts. We must tap into the many thought leaders, scholars, and influencers with diverse and innovative ideas that can shape tomorrow's politics and policies. These values have guided my life and activism in public service, and they are the values I hope to bring to the Alameda County Democratic Central Committee.

Our aging population and working families are among Berkeley's most vulnerable API community members. As middle to low-income families continue to be displaced from our community, we see housing and economic services for our most vulnerable members of the API community being cut. We are expanding affordable housing options for families to ensure that Berkeley remains a vibrant and inclusive city.

As API community members, we cannot turn a blind eye to those in our own community who require our assistance the most. Furthermore, we must be willing to work toward a more diverse API coalition that includes Southeast Asians, Filipinos, and Indian Americans.

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? *

12 years

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

Chief of Staff to Berkeley Councilmember Ben Bartlett

Employer: City of Berkeley

Length of Employment: Nov 2018- Present

Haas School of Business, MBA

2022-Present

Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board Commission (2014 – 2018)

Berkeley Zero Waste Commission (2017)

Ventura County Community College School District Student Trustee (2010-2011)

Berkeley Student Cooperative (2012-2014, 2021-2022)

East Bay Stonewall Democratic Club – Board member, former Secretary & VP (Mar 2015 – Present)

East Bay Young Democrats – Board member & Former President (2017 – 2023)

California Young Democrats LGBTQ Caucus – Chair (May 2019 – Present)

Sierra Club SF Bay Chapter – Club Member (2014 – Present)

East Bay for Everyone – Club Member (2018 – Present)

Berkeley Democratic Club – Club Member (2018 – Present)

Berkeley Citizens Action – Club Member (2018 – Present)

Berkeley Progressive Alliance – Club Member (2016 – Present)

Berkeley Tenants Union – Board Member (2013 – 2015)

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? *

With Oakland and Berkeley making up over 80-90% of all voters, around 18% are Asians, and Berkeley makes up the super majority of residents. The top three groups in order are Chinese, Asian Indians, and Other Asians. Note, this is from Berkeley being 20.9% Asian and Oakland being 15.8% Asian.

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 Central Committee could take a multifaceted approach to increasing its relevance to the Asian/Pacific American (APA) communities in Alameda County. To begin, advocating for immediate local concerns is critical, especially addressing public safety issues such as targeted crimes and attacks against elderly Asians, particularly women, and combating discrimination. This entails submitting timely resolutions supporting these issues and demonstrating a proactive attitude. Second, improving coordination with the Asian Pacific American Democratic Caucus (APADC) can ensure that the distinct challenges faced by various A/PA communities are recognized and adequately represented. Endorsing APADC-supported candidates can also align the Committee's objectives with the community's needs. Finally, increasing voter registration and turnout efforts in collaboration with the APADC is critical, especially given the risks of census underrepresentation. This strategy will not only improve political representation but also raise the voices of APA communities in essential decision-making processes. When combined with broader initiatives such as language access, these steps can significantly improve the Committee's engagement with and representation of the interests of the APA communities.

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. *

First, developing and supporting leadership and political training programs tailored to the APA community is critical. These programs should focus on developing future leaders by providing them with the necessary skills and knowledge, encouraging active political participation and effective community representation. Second, fostering collaborative advocacy and policy development with APA advocacy groups and community leaders is critical. This collaboration aims to develop and advocate for policies that address critical issues such as language access, educational equity, healthcare disparities, and anti-discrimination. Ensuring these vital issues are discussed in policy debates and legislative processes is essential for amplifying the APA communities' voices and concerns. Third, it is critical to increase public safety advocacy, particularly in light of increased targeted crimes against APA individuals. This would entail holding community safety workshops, collaborating with local law enforcement on culturally sensitive practices, and establishing rapid response teams to deal with hate crimes and safety concerns.

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

I do not have a comprehensive list, but some are: Sheng Thao - Oakland Mayor Rashi Kesarwani - Berkeley City Council Alfred Twu - AC Transit Janani Ramachandran - Oakland City Council Nikki Fortunato-Bas - Oakland City Council

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 it is harmful only because the APA community grassroots, even beyond APA Dem Caucus, was not consulted. More importantly, there seems to be a lack of interest in actually engaging with the APA Community regarding social issues like LGBTQ rights, including folks like Alfred Twu and myself getting canceled and labeled anti-trans in 2018 by folks like the Harvey Milk Democratic Club for simply engaging with folks like Josephine Zhao regarding her misguided views on LGBTQ rights.

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

Maybe, I believe the process is adequate regarding a resolution going to a committee and then to the board. What fails is those putting it forward and the members passing it through not asking the right questions, like are community members consulted, etc. That is why I'm running for Central Committee

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

Bad, that is why I'm running again for this role, even though I lost four years ago. Our party is more focused on unvetted social issues instead of taking just as much time to tackle the problems that directly impact people, the bread and butter issues, jobs, public safety, infrastructure, and issues that residents care most about.

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.

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms