

# 2024 Central Committee Questionnaire

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

Email \*

kapriforce@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 \*

Kalimah Priforce

City and zip code of residence. \*

Emeryville, CA 94608

What is your campaign website address?

http://www.priforce.com

What is your campaign email address? \*

vote@priforce.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. \*

People-Powered Progressive Slate

Are you an APA Caucus member? \*

Yes

No

Why are you seeking the Caucus's endorsement? \*

The APA Dem Caucus' advocacy in raising the life outcomes and profiles of members of the Asian community is why I got into politics, to give voice to the voiceless. It's also why people have desperately tried to box me into a political position but have failed to define me and why I would be seeking this caucus' endorsement.

In my one year since becoming Councilmember of the City of Emeryville and been endorsed candidate for that race and the ADEMS AD18 delegate race that I also won, I have championed Emeryville's public safety policy decision to protect residents and small businesses through license plate reader technology (ALPR).

Addressing our public safety crises while still supportive of Madam DA Price is what makes me the kind of progressive politician that listens to people and listens to the people in spite of the opposition.

The same goes for our housing crisis and my leveraging my years with founding and operating a tenant board for my 300+ unit building in Emeryville to form Emeryville's first tenant union and homeowners alliance. This tenant union brings together the concerns and biggest dilemmas faced by renters and small landowners. I remain critical of corporate landlords, YIMBY, and the real estate lobby's influence over California politics both state and local, but not all landlords are created equal. I believe that a middle ground that doesn't divide but unites is the way to go.

I am seeking the endorsement from my caucus because of my fight for mobility for everyone, but especially those who are marginalized. I don't believe in tokenism and virtue signaling towards support for the Asian community. The Asian community know that I am my own person and don't have to prove anything through rhetoric, or who a member of my family is, or Asian-related roots. It's in my politics, my character, and integrity that we all work together, strive together, and lift one another, because we are all in the same village.

That is how I will vote as a member of the central committee for our local democratic party and why I will always be a friend to this community as my community.

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? \*

Thirteen years

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

Just a kid from Brooklyn, Kalimah Priforce (kuh-LEE-muh, PRY-force) is the friendly neighborhood hacktivist in Emeryville's city council as a former serial entrepreneur, local democracy advocate and early pioneer of the "Learn to Code" movement before becoming California's first Haitian American elected official and an Assembly District 18 Democrat state delegate for Oakland, Emeryville, and Alameda.

By utilizing "hackathons" as breakthrough educational models, Kalimah served as the nation's foremost hacktivist educator for low opportunity youth addressing the world's biggest problems through tech innovation. In forming Emeryville's first tenant union and homeowner alliance, he has emerged as a leading voice in reshaping public policy and philanthropy that closes equity gaps among social and digital divides.

An eight year old Kalimah held a successful hunger strike against his Bedford-Stuyvesant group home to add books to its library. This drew the attention of Buddhist monastics who privately tutored him until the age of 14. By hacking his eighth grade attendance records, he was admitted to his dream school in Harlem. Upon discovery, his principal, Dr. Lorraine Monroe became his mentor as he inherited her mission to transform children's lives.

Sold before his 20th birthday, he launched his first tech venture at 16. Driven by the traumatic loss of his eighteen year old brother to gun violence, he became founder and CEO of Qeyno (KEE-no) Labs, an Echoing Green funded social enterprise that introduced the first globally-televised hackathon to millions for the MSNBC mini-documentary, "Swimming in Their Genius," and is the central figure for the award-winning indie film, "Code Oakland."

As senior fellow for Van Jones's Dream.org, Kalimah presented the first hackathon, on behalf of Prince, to the Essence Festival for the 30th anniversary of "Purple Rain," and has been featured on Forbes, Black Enterprise, PBS, KQED, NPR, TEDx, and the front pages of USA Today for his work. In helping to also form The Hidden Genius Project, an Oakland non-profit that trains young men of color in coding, his journey was recognized by the Obama White House as a Champion of Change.

His upcoming memoir, "How To Raise A Hacker," reveals his formidable journey from group homes to Silicon Valley boardrooms while also serving on the National Advisory Council for Forward Promise.

A member of historically-Black, progressive parish, St. Columba Church, Kalimah continues to bring mindfulness towards building healthy villages for the next generation of hacktivists for social good.

## 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? \*

For Emeryville, Chinese is the largest Asian and Pacific Islander ethnicity, followed by Korean, and Indian. The fourth largest would be Filipino.

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? \*

Showing up in ways that feel more inclusive to the Asian American community. I am a progressive, but progressives can be just as non-inclusive as non-progressives. The politics of inclusion and equity opens doors rather than building walls and having Asian American concerns play a greater role in the decision making process for the central committee is important to a stronger Democratic community. With that strength, we can attract more Asian Americans to the party and reverse that No Party trend.

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. \*

Outreach would be a key strategy in forming rewarding relationships between central committee and the A/PA community. That could look like showing up at senior and cultural centers (I've become a popular figure at Emeryville's own senior center), sitting on panels for thought leadership discussions, and playing the role of mediator when conflicts arise between the A/PA community and neighborhoods with others.

Data Collection comes with asking the right questions and CC hasn't been doing that. As a techie, my inclination is towards innovation and using modern tools to solve modern problems if and when older solutions have expired. Gathering data pertinent to the the A/PA community will help the scope of the work of CC in serving communities better.

Communication should be direct and when a crisis event comes, such as A/PA-related racism during the pandemic, or when the eviction moratorium split many communities apart, there should be a sense from the A/PA community that they have a direct line to the leadership of the CC for support and formulating best practices.

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

Lena Tam, Gary Lym, Sheng Thao, Alfred Twu

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.

The process for drafting and adopting resolutions was as inclusive as I would have wanted and of times I declined to support a resolution, not because of the cause, but because the process was due diligent. That is what I would push for.

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

It is not. Too many insider politics and lobbying interests involved in the process.

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

Not at all, or at the very least, not enough, and that needs to change.

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