

2024 Central Committee Questionnaire

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

Email *

lauraleighgeist@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 *

Laura Leigh Geist

City and zip code of residence. *

Oakland 94610

What is your campaign website address?

What is your campaign email address? *

lauraleighgeist@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, Loren Taylor slate

Are you an APA Caucus member? *

Yes

No

Why are you seeking the Caucus's endorsement? *

This is an important time in Oakland for real, practical, and meaningful change. It is critical that we include every community in the conversation for making Oakland safe, vibrant, a place for real business opportunity and growth for our youth. That is absolutely not possible without the support and inclusion of the APA community. For example, China Town and Little Saigon are critical to Oakland's future and must be front and center in developing the needed solutions to our City's current challenges. This endorsement is a commitment by me as a candidate to not just listen but act on the needs of the diverse APA community in Oakland.

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? *

26 years

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

First and foremost, I have lived and raised my children (a son and daughter) in Oakland. As a member of this community for over 26 years, I have not only loved it, but become keenly aware of the City's needs. Coming out of COVID, these past two years are particularly devastating. Our larger community does not feel and is not safe. This is especially true of our Asian residents who have suffered increased hate crimes, increased physical violence, and intolerable property damage to Asian businesses and neighborhoods.

I know I can meaningfully contribute to making Oakland better as a member of the Central Committee for Dist. 18. As a lawyer in private practice for nearly 30 years, I am well trained in synthesizing extensive amounts of information; working with various stakeholders to come to resolutions that address competing needs and viewpoints; and driving toward demonstrable solutions. These skills will allow me to vet candidates with critical questions, understand the key issues facing voters, and bringing pragmatism to the process for endorsing candidates. Taking candidates to task on their specific plans, and challenging the transparency and process for showing achievement of stated goals. I will work to make sure we no longer endorse candidates that "say" what we want to hear, but "do" little to make real changes.

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? *

Current available data for Assembly Dist. 18 indicates 22.1% Asian. Comprised of Chinese, Vietnamese and Indian/Filipino as the top three Asian ethnic groups.

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? *

As a member of the Central Committee, asking questions and listening is critical to not only vetting candidates but understanding the important issues of constituents. It will be critical to get out into the community, especially the Asian communities in Alameda County to understand what matters most, what issues they voters want addressed and what they need and want to know about candidates. Not just registered Democrats but those who have not affiliated with the Party. These are key voters. Every member of the Central Committee needs to be 100% committed to taking the time to attend Asian community events, set up meeting with key leaders in the community, and listen to what is matters to Asian voters and have these questions answered by the candidates.

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, go to A/PA sponsored community events and actively listen. Second, list out what are the key issues for the A/PA community and vet those issues with Asian community leaders to understand nuances of this diverse community, and make sure we cover the specific needs in the community that a candidate must address. Third, use my skills as a seasoned litigator to question candidates fully, not allowing platitudes or surface responses, but digging deep to know if the candidates have real policies, initiative and concrete plans to address key issues. The same is absolutely true for Resolutions.

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

1. Mayor Sheng Thao 2. Dist. 2, Nikki Fortunato Bas

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.

n/a -not an incumbent.

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

No. I understand there is only one week before a meeting for the proposed Resolution to be vetted by members. Not nearly enough time for members to review, or for the public to comment. This allows Resolutions to pass with little or no real community engagement including potential negative impacts on communities like the APA community.

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

Past resolutions have not been effective. Low income residents continue to struggle inordinately with high cost of living in Alameda and limited community resources. These Resolutions pass without any real accountability by the Party or its candidates who spend more time getting elected and playing politics than vetting and supporting real policy with measured outcomes. We need more accountability for actions taken to improve the lives of low income APA residents of Alameda County. Photo ops are not policy and words are not actions. We need action.

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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