

East Bay Stonewall Democratic Club Endorsement Questionnaire

Thank you for your interest in obtaining an endorsement from the East Bay Stonewall Democratic Club.

Per the Club's bylaws, to be eligible for endorsement, a candidate must be a registered Democrat. All candidates must also complete this candidate questionnaire to be considered for an endorsement. Endorsements are decided by the general membership, and candidates must receive at least 60% of votes cast to be endorsed.

The deadline for questionnaires is posted on the East Bay Stonewall website (<http://eastbaystonewalldemocrats.org/Elections>). Any candidate submitting a questionnaire that is received after the deadline will not appear on the endorsement ballot. To ensure a fair process, no grace period will be granted.

Please return your completed questionnaire via Google forms by clicking submit at the bottom of this form. All form submissions are final. If you have questions, please contact Joe Greaves, EBSDC PAC chair via email at jsphgreaves@gmail.com.

Email *

juangonzalezformayor@gmail.com

Name (First Last) *

Juan Gonzalez

Are you a registered Democrat *

Yes

No

Office you are seeking? (e.g. City Council, School Board, Supervisor, etc) *

Mayor

Jurisdiction *

San Leandro

District *

San Leandro

Are you an East Bay Stonewall Democratic Club member in good standing? If you are unsure, email eastbaystonewalldems@gmail.com. *

Yes

No

I self-identify as: (check all boxes that apply; note these identifiers will be used publicly during our endorsement process.) *

Gay

Lesbian

Transgender

Gender non-conforming

Bisexual

Queer

Straight

Other:

How have you participated in East Bay Stonewall Democratic Club activities, and/or supported the Club other ways? What other LGBTQ+ organizations are you affiliated with and in what capacity? What other Democratic clubs are you affiliated with? *

While I may have participated in activities jointly supported by the East Bay Stonewall Democratic club, I've not specifically supported the club in the past. While I am not affiliated with organizations that identify themselves as LGBTQ+ focused, I do sit on the Board of Directors of Side by Side, an organization that delivers a diverse array of services, including support for LGBTQIA+ youth who are no longer living at home due to complex family circumstances. As for democratic clubs, I am a member of the San Leandro Democratic Club.

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Using specific examples, please identify the causes you have advocated for and the ways you have helped advance LGBTQ+ rights or otherwise helped foster a community of inclusivity for LGBTQ+ individuals and families. *

At work, in our schools, and in my city, I have promoted inclusivity. Going back to the start of my work career in 1990, when old-school leaders would say inappropriate things about sexual orientation and gender, I would push back noting that we should be welcoming of all individuals. My persistence resulted in a work environment teeming with highly diverse individuals, a number of whom self-identified as gay or lesbian. To this day, I still serve as an ally, most recently attending KPMG's Pride event in June.

One of my former employees recently wrote a testimonial for me noting, "As a refugee who immigrated from Vietnam to the Bay Area and who was the first in his family to attend college and who first came out in college, I struggled to be myself and always felt like the "other" in the classroom and in the white-collar professional workplace surrounded by classmates, colleagues and clients who were generally of a different race, class, sexual orientation, background and upbringing. But with Juan as a professor and a practice leader, he created a safe and welcoming environment for me to learn, grow and excel and went out of his way to help me navigate this period of my life." – Shareholder of a Law Firm and Former Deputy GC of a Global U.S. Airline

Back in the late 1990s and early 2000s when our children entered school, openly gay/lesbian families were often shunned by other elementary school families. My wife, our three boys, and I welcomed and befriended these families. In addition to the normal points of connectivity like birthday parties and parenting advice, we soon came to share another point of connection: adopting a child. We not only shared fun stories, but also supported each other through the challenges of being adoptive parents.

In my community I have supported LGBTQ+ public events and rallies. For example, I've taken time off work to join the progressive flag raising at San Leandro City Hall. Earlier this year, I joined Castro Valley Pride in solidarity supporting Drag Queen Reading Time, directly in response to the attack at the San Lorenzo Library. I also attended the Every Month is Pride Month launch at the San Lorenzo Library. While these events are important, the most powerful allyship often occurs by supporting individuals. When a young gay man at our church filled the sanctuary with his beautiful voice, we not only invited him to join our choir, but also provided him "family" connectivity when he encountered difficulties in his personal life. When a lesbian teacher was looking to earn some extra spending money during the summer, she, her wife, and son, spent time with us landscaping. When the mayor's lesbian daughter invited us to her wedding, we attended with our full family to celebrate her love for her wife. At that wedding, I reconnected with a middle aged woman who introduced me to her girlfriend saying, "Hey, this is the guy who taught me how to play guitar at church!"

Each of these individual circumstances and actions exemplifies my longstanding commitment to treat people with dignity and respect, embracing people for who they are, and celebrating their contributions to our human family.

Have you previously supported LGBTQ+ candidates for office? If yes, did that include financial support? *

Yes. Most recently, I supported James Aguilar in his re-election bid to the San Leandro Unified School District Board of Trustees.

Which LGBTQ+ organizations and elected officials have formally endorsed you for this race? *

James Aguilar, President, San Leandro Unified School District Board of Trustees
Peter Oshinski, Vice President, San Leandro Unified School District Board of Trustees
Shay Franco-Clausen, Vice Chair, Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority Board of Directors

Please describe a policy/goal that is part of your formal platform that benefits the LGBTQ+ community? *

Having canvassed almost 7,000 households to date, I feel highly confident stating that San Leandrans want a safer and more vibrant city. While my sample of LGBTQ+ households is smaller, I have found that these two objectives resonate with these voters as well.

As for the first attribute (safety), San Leandrans are tired of the increased property crime, the physical and verbal assaults on individuals, and the increasingly dangerous behavior of drivers on city streets. Residents are frustrated by efforts to defund the police department and the growing number of staff departures.

In response, I am committed to smart, targeted investments in public safety. I will establish unarmed, mobile assistance teams with medical and mental health training to respond to non-violent 911 calls. This will provide better service to those in need and free police resources to focus on criminal activity. This focus is imperative because San Leandro has significantly less officers on patrol today compared to a decade ago, even though the population of San Leandro has grown by almost 10%. I will restore our police department to full strength.

Improving public safety, however, requires more. We must also restore the trust of all San Leandrans in our police department. Trust is built upon honesty, transparency, and accountability, which is why I will continue to support our city's efforts to implement an effective Community Police Review Board.

With respect to vibrancy, I believe that the mayor is the chief cheerleader for the city, and must actively pursue and attract businesses to the city. As an experienced business leader, I understand the complexity involved in a business' decision making process and can support staff's efforts to position the city attractively. For example, new businesses are looking for the amenities that the city offers like coffee shops, nice parks, good restaurants, and lively after-work activities. Based on my canvassing, I know that many residents are clamoring for more of these same amenities.

I also understand that economics is a two-sided matter: it is insufficient to simply attract businesses; we must also encourage residents to use the services offered by these new businesses. I will help drive that demand through tax holidays, increased housing, and helping businesses to improve their customer focus
will help reinvigorate our local economy.

What makes you uniquely qualified for the office and how are you different or unique from the other candidates in your race? *

I've answered this question based on my opponent's websites. The first candidate has no identifiable website; the second candidate's website offers no indication of priorities; and the third candidate's website offers a bulleted list with no descriptions.

In contrast to other candidates, I believe San Leandro needs a full time mayor who is 100% dedicated to our city; I am the only candidate committed to retiring from my current job and serving as a full-time mayor. I am also the only multilingual candidate; I speak Spanish fluently and French conversationally.

In contrast to other candidates, I want to drive economic revitalization, and have been steadfast in that commitment since the beginning of my campaign last year. Why? Growth creates new jobs and promotes sustainability through reduced commute times. Growth also increases tax revenues, which supports improvements to our roads and social programs. As an economist and business owner, I understand the various factors that affect business decisions, such as availability of skilled workers, predictability of the permitting process, speed of government approvals, and the support of local government and bargaining units. As the only candidate with 30 years of business experience, I am best positioned to drive a balanced approach to economic revitalization.

In contrast to other candidates, I have focused on improving the partnership with our schools. At San Leandro City Council meetings I've heard council members tell public speakers, "We have nothing to do with the schools." I want to see this change. For decades I have actively supported public education in San Leandro, both at school sites and as an ardent supporter of multiple bond measures and tax measures that raised over \$350 million for our schools. I have worked collaboratively with members of bargaining units, earning me the endorsement of John Sherr and Anita Waldren, respectively the former President and Vice President of the San Leandro Teachers' Association.

In contrast to other candidates, I am highlighting the importance of improved communication and community engagement. As the Vice Chair of the city's Budget Task Force, I actively participated on a subcommittee focused on increasing community engagement, wrote a synopsis of the subcommittee's report, and advocated for increased funding to drive improved community engagement. I have also advocated for multilingual communication as a tactic for improved community engagement. As a Task Force, we modeled this behavior in our community engagement meeting work sessions by providing translations in Spanish and Mandarin. My campaign website has also embraced this approach, as it currently offers six distinct languages (English, Spanish, Portuguese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Chinese – with both modern and traditional characters).

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