

Democratic Party of Contra Costa County Candidate Questionnaire

Thank you for seeking the endorsement of the Democratic Party of Contra Costa County (DPCCC).

Please submit your completed questionnaire and remit the endorsement application fee of \$30 no later than , August 12, 2024. Interviews will not be scheduled without both a completed questionnaire and received payment.

- Pay Endorsement Application Fee:

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/2024campaignunityfund>.

1. Click on "Donate"
 2. The page will say "2024 Campaign Unity Funds" - Just fill in \$30 as the amount to pay.
- Complete Candidate Questionnaire.

IMPORTANT INFO

- Your application fee must be paid before questionnaires will be processed.
- Interviews will not be scheduled without both a completed payment and completed questionnaire.
- You must have submitted your questionnaire and payment **before August 12, 2024 before 11:59pm PST.**
- Your completed questionnaire will be added to the DPCCC website after all interviews are conducted.
- The DPCCC membership will vote on endorsements at a **Special Meeting on August 29, 2024.** You will be sent an invitation to the meeting which you are welcome to attend.

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The DPCCC aspires to be an organization where members are empowered and feel safe to be who they are, regardless of ethnic, cultural, or social demographics. We are committed to fostering equity and social justice through our policies and actions.

We hold ourselves accountable for unwanted behavior and we expect decision-making to be based on justice principles. We actively oppose **racism, sexism, classism, ageism, ableism, homophobia, and all other forms of prejudice wherever we see it**, and we take action individually and collectively to right past wrongs in our communities.

Section 1: Candidate Information

Name (First, Last): *

Amanda Szakats
.....

Preferred Name (if different than campaign name):
.....

Age *

- Under 18
- 18 to 24
- 25-44
- 45-65
- Over 65
- Prefer not to disclose

Pronouns: *

- She/Her/Hers
- He/Him/His
- They/Them/Theirs
- Ze/Zie/Hir/Hirs
- Prefer not to disclose
- Other:

Gender Identity (*check all that apply.*): *

- Gender non-conforming
- Genderqueer
- Genderfluid
- Non-binary
- Woman
- Man
- Transgender
- Prefer not to disclose
- Other:

Sexual Identity (*check all that apply.*): *

- Bisexual
- Queer
- Gay
- Heterosexual or straight
- Lesbian
- Asexual
- Pansexual
- Prefer not to disclose
- Other:

With which racial or ethnic group(s) do you identify? (*Mark all that apply.*): *

- Native American or Indigenous
- Black, African-American
- Eastern European
- Latino/a/x/e
- Pacific Islander
- Asian
- East Asian
- South Asian
- Southeast Asian
- Middle Eastern, Northern African
- Native Hawaiian
- East African
- West African
- South African
- Central African
- White
- Multiracial/Mixed Race
- Prefer not to disclose
- Other:

Which office are you seeking? *

Pleasant Hill City Council, District 5

CA FPPC ID # *

1470828

Campaign Website *

<http://www.amandaszakats.com/>

Campaign Consultant/Manager *

Jeremy Carlson

Campaign Phone Number *

9257650483

Social Media Handles *

www.facebook.com/SzakatsforPleasantHill2024, @amandaszakats

1.1 - Why are you running for this office? Give no more than your top 3 reasons. *

I want to make a difference in my community and make sure the city's fiscal health is secure.

1.2 - What are the responsibilities that come with the office you are running for? *

Some of the responsibilities include appointing members to boards and commissions, appointing the city manager, and presiding over hearings on matters such as regulatory licenses and variances.

1.3 - What are your personal or professional qualifications that you believe make you the best candidate? *

As an English as a Second Language teacher who teaches many different populations, I am committed to maintaining a sense of community in our city where all feel welcome, and diversity is celebrated. I have many years of experience working collaboratively with teachers and have served on the boards of several local organizations and have experience working on budgets and fundraising.

1.4 - What are your top goals for this office? How do you plan on achieving them? *

One top goal is to enhance traffic safety in my district by working collaboratively with the traffic commission. Another goal is to celebrate diversity and work with the Civic Action and Diversity commissions about adding a Pride Celebration to our city's festivals. Finally, we have prominent vacant space downtown that is impacting the fiscal health of the city. I plan to work with local business, including the Chamber of Commerce, and the landlord to discuss how we can creatively fill the space in a way that benefits our residents. Finally, Pleasant Hill lacks affordable housing. I would like to promote smart development to redevelop underutilized properties for housing and promote ADUs.

1.5 - How do you plan on engaging your constituents in dialogue after you are elected? *

I plan to regularly send email newsletters and host coffees and conversation events.

1.6 - This is a 3-Part Question: Why are you seeking the endorsement of the DPCCC? How will you use our endorsement? How will you support other endorsed candidates and issues? *

I am a proud Democrat and hope to use the endorsement to help spread my campaign message. I would advertise the endorsement on promotional materials. I plan to support other candidates through attending their events, donating, postcard writing and call banking. I have already donated to a number of Democrats this election cycle, both locally and nationally and helped host a fundraiser for Shanelle Scales - Preston. I have also attended fundraisers and donated to Mark DeSaulnier, Ken Carlson, Diana Becton and other local Democrats.

1.7 - Please feel free to include any additional information you would like us to consider in evaluating your candidacy. *

I was a Kamala Captain in 2020, working to get Kamala Harris elected. I am also the proud parent of a transgender child and have marched twice in the SF Pride Parade, once with Kamala Harris and once with Planned Parenthood. I also have marched in the Clayton Pride Parade.

Section 2: Democratic History

2.1 - List your previous and current party affiliations. When did you first register as a Democrat and why? *

I am a Democrat. Previously, when I worked in journalism, I was "decline to state." This was the recommendation of the newspaper. I believe I first registered as a Democrat in 2019 due to my excitement about Kamala Harris's campaign.

2.2 - I have read and acknowledge the California Democratic Party's current platform (value statement) and will adhere to these values in the performance of my elected position. *

To learn about the CADEM Platform, please click [here](#).

Yes

No

2.3 - In your opinion, which elements of the CADEM Platform are most relevant to the position you are seeking? If elected, how do you plan to advance them? *

I believe the party's platform on children and young families and the disabled pertains to my position, particularly the desire to create a safe community. Many parts of my district lack sidewalks, dedicated bike paths and other traffic mitigation measures. Safety for children, older adults and those with disabilities is a top priority for me.

2.4 - Have you actively supported policies and initiatives that prioritize and protect reproductive healthcare and freedom, and can you affirm your commitment to continuing this support if elected? *

Yes

No

2.5 - If elected, what would you do to advance equity, anti-racism, justice, and belonging? *

I would participate in DEI training for city officials. I would make sure our commissions and city staff reflect the diversity of Pleasant Hill. I will take seriously any report of discrimination within any city division.

2.6 - Have you actively opposed LGBTQIA+ issues, which may involve voting against solidarity, supporting harmful or exclusionary policies, or publicly expressing opposition through statements or comments? (i.e. voting against or making disparaging remarks about the display of pride flags, marriage equality, trans-inclusive policies, or queer-inclusive curricula). *

Yes

No

2.7 - Have you previously sought the endorsement of the DPCCC? If yes, for what elected office? Were you endorsed? *

no

2.8 - Please list any elected offices, positions and date(s), which you hold/held or campaigned for as a candidate. *

n/a

2.9 - In what ways have you supported and actively participated in the Democratic Party at the local, state, and national levels? *

I have participated in a number of fundraisers for candidates up and down the ballot here in California including for Barabara Lee, Cory Booker, Kirstin Gillebrand, Christy Smith, Colin Allred, Diane Becton, Shanelle Scales-Preson, Ken Carlson and more. I also phone banked, text banked and wrote postcards in 2020 and 2022. I ran for delegate for this year's national convention, and lost by a small margin.

2.10 - Please list any clubs, boards, commissions, and /or organizations with which you are an active member, including the length of your affiliation and any leadership position you hold/held. *

Church of the Resurrection - Pleasant Hill, two terms on the vestry (church board), one as president. Each term is 3 years. Past board member of the Pleasant Hil Dolphins, the Park District's swim club. Past board member for the Strandwood Parent Teacher Association, past board member for the Sequoia Middle School Parent Faculty Council.

2.11 - Have you ever endorsed non-Democrats? *

Yes

No

2.11a - If so, what were the circumstances?

n/a

Section 3: References & Club Endorsements

3.1 - Please list any other endorsements you have received for this campaign. *

Keisha Nzewi - MDUSD school board trustee
Angela Andrews, Hayward City Council
Courtney O'Brien Masalla, MUSD board president,
Jeremy Carlson, executive director of the Pleasant Hill Chamber of Commerce

3.2 - What other endorsements are you seeking? *

The Labor Council, Planned Parenthood, Contra Costa Young Democrats, past and current Pleasant Hill City and Contra Costa Board of Supervisors officials.

Some of the Democratic Clubs use this questionnaire in their endorsement process. If you would like to be considered for Democratic club endorsement(s), please contact the club(s) directly by going to our DPCCC website club's page:

<https://contracostadems.com/clubs/>

Part 2: DPCCC Values Section

Please proceed to fill out the 2nd section of the Candidate Questionnaire on the Democratic Party of Contra Costa County's Values.

DPCCC Value: Criminal Justice & Conflict Resolution

- *Opposes criminalization of low level offenses, advocates for Community Support Services, funding for prompt rape kit processing, gun violence prevention measures; Opposes scapegoating, racial profiling, religious profiling, bigotry, vigilantism, exploitation, and any xenophobic conduct that polarize communities and denounce actions by the government or individuals that keep undocumented immigrants in the shadows of our society; Supports Law Enforcement Training, Civilian Oversight Committees, independent investigators for cases involving the use of deadly force or in-custody deaths, restorative justice;*
- *Supports a properly funded and staffed the U.S. foreign service that promotes democracy and human rights around the world; Supports candidates who work to de-escalate tension especially in areas of conflict like Israel/Gaza, Sudan, Haiti, and other parts of the world through good faith negotiations and work for world peace; Endorse candidates who support the Democratic Party as it works to counter aggression by countries that violate the sovereignty of other countries and that fund and implement physical, cyber, and financial attacks on democracies and developing countries.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. *

As a teacher to many immigrant groups, I oppose any type of racial profiling and bigotry. I support DEI training for city officials and law enforcement and deescalation training for police officers.

DPCCC Value: Criminal Justice & Conflict Resolution

- *Opposes criminalization of low level offenses, advocates for Community Support Services, funding for prompt rape kit processing, gun violence prevention measures; Opposes scapegoating, racial profiling, religious profiling, bigotry, vigilantism, exploitation, and any xenophobic conduct that polarize communities and denounce actions by the government or individuals that keep undocumented immigrants in the shadows of our society; Supports Law Enforcement Training, Civilian Oversight Committees, independent investigators for cases involving the use of deadly force or in-custody deaths, restorative justice;*
- *Supports a properly funded and staffed the U.S. foreign service that promotes democracy and human rights around the world; Supports candidates who work to de-escalate tension especially in areas of conflict like Israel/Gaza, Sudan, Haiti, and other parts of the world through good faith negotiations and work for world peace; Endorse candidates who support the Democratic Party as it works to counter aggression by countries that violate the sovereignty of other countries and that fund and implement physical, cyber, and financial attacks on democracies and developing countries.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. *

As a teacher to many immigrant groups, I oppose any type of racial profiling and bigotry. I support DEI training for city staff, elected, officials and law enforcement and deescalation training for police officers.

DPCCC Value: Education & Child Support Services

- *Advocates for high-quality, affordable child care; support programs for low income families including access to parks and job retraining; ensures educational materials (textbooks, library books) are inclusive, historically accurate, and reflect scientific consensus including age-appropriate, medically accurate sex/gender education; replacing sworn peace officers in schools with trained non-police personnel; Supports policies that respect students' civil rights related to gender expression and addresses issues like gender-based violence and harassment.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. *

I am a strong advocate for public education, diverse textbooks and acceptance of all LGBTQ+ persons. I would support appointing members to the Education Commission who value diversity and public education.

DPCCC Value: Seniors & Veteran Support Services

- *Supports the California Master Plan for Aging including dignified living at home housing options that are age, disability, and dementia-friendly; prioritize public housing initiatives over privatization for seniors and adults with disabilities; support retraining for those aged 55-65, and extend unemployment; oppose mandatory retirement; call for stronger oversight of reverse mortgage programs, rigorous prosecution of financial crimes against seniors; support comprehensive single-payer healthcare, with interim Medicare Part D reforms; support HICAP services, affordable mental healthcare including issues around isolation, quality caregiving, and increased funding for In-Home Supportive Services. Preserve programs like Adult Protective Services and home-delivered meals; advocate for the removal of the FICA income limit to strengthen Social Security and preserve pensions.*
- *Champions the needs of veterans and military families by promoting equitable treatment and benefits, access to education including tuition waivers and retraining, adequate healthcare funding including government assistance for those exposed to toxins; elimination of veteran homelessness, establishment of Veterans' Courts and justice programs and support independent investigations of claims of hazing, rape, sexual assault and harassment and that the military remove the chain of command from all investigations and prosecutions; support a path to citizenship for military service members, and protections against discrimination based on ethnicity, disability, gender identity, political affiliation, race, religion, or sexual orientation; oppose deportation of military personnel and limitations on citizenship for children of veterans who are born abroad.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. *

It is important that veterans have affordable housing and that our seniors are able to age in place. I believe new housing should include affordability components. I believe in supporting smart development, including redeveloping underutilized properties near transportation and ADUs to create more affordable housing.

DPCCC Value: Affordable Housing & Environmental Protections

- *Supports eviction protections, rent control/stabilization, anti-harassment ordinances, and habitability protections; Supports zoning and housing policies that ensure sustainability and affordability, including infill and mixed-use developments that balance job opportunities with housing availability; Promotes the integration of green spaces and community gardens in all communities; Supports local authority in phasing out fossil fuel extraction and preventing the zoning of new extraction sites; Advocates for strong regulatory measures for setting science-based health and safety setbacks from residential areas for industrial sites, including oil and gas wells and toxic dump sites.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. *

I support housing close to transportation and housing that includes amenities such as parks and green spaces. All proposed housing should be evaluated for its environmental impact and should include some affordable (below market) units.

DPCCC Value: Equality & Human Rights

- *Actively advocates for a just and inclusive society, speaking out against all forms of racism, discrimination, harassment, hatred, and violence; Supports movements and initiatives that address discrimination; Enforces policies that ensure equal opportunities and equal pay for equal work across genders, races, and abilities; Upholds the rights of transgender and gender non-conforming individuals for acknowledgment of their stated name, gender, and pronoun; Supports the use of gender-neutral language to foster an inclusive environment; Promotes the participation of women, LGBTQIA+, people with disabilities, and people of color in elected office and ensures access to facilities consistent with individuals' gender identity and disability access; Supports the right to free speech, ensuring it does not extend to discriminatory practices against any group based on race, religion, gender identity, or sexual orientation.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. *

As the mother of a transgender son, I believe diversity is our strength. I'm an advocate for DEI training for all city employees and elected officials, pay equity and the inclusion of people of every background. I support inclusive language.

DPCCC Value: Healthcare & Reproductive Rights

- *Advocates for the preservation of rights under Roe v. Wade, guaranteeing confidential and unrestricted access to reproductive services without the need for consent or judicial intervention, ensuring continued coverage of all healthcare options; Works toward implementing a universal, single-payer healthcare system, while in the interim, seeking reforms to make Medicare Part D more affordable and accessible, including the ability for Medicare to negotiate drug prices.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. *

I support the right of a woman to make her own reproductive choices about her body. Affordable and quality healthcare should be available for all.

DPCCC Value: Economic Justice & Business Development

- *Support for Small Businesses and Entrepreneurship focusing on women, people of color, and those with limited entrepreneurship opportunities including veterans; Support the rights of employees to organize and Project Labor Agreements; Ensures a safe working environment free from harassment, intimidation, and retaliation; Advocates for the establishment of local banks and credit unions, limiting regressive financial operations like check cashing businesses and pawnshops; Promotes Project Labor Agreements to protect workers; Supports initiatives to counteract "food deserts" by developing local grocery stores and community gardens in underrepresented areas.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. *

I support small businesses and lending institutions and would work to cut red tape for all new businesses. Diversity among business owners benefits the entire community.

Reminders:

* After submitting this questionnaire, please go and pay your endorsement application fee at:


<https://contracostadems.com/donate>

* Please direct questions to the Endorsements Committee Chair Tamela Hawley or Vice Chair Cameron Sasai at endorsements@contracostadems.com

* The DPCCC Code of Conduct: <https://contracostadems.com/about/code-of-conduct/>

* The CADEM Party Platform: <https://cadem.org/our-platform/>

If you like, you may submit a biography and/or resume in the section below. Not required.

 Amanda Szakats...

 Add file

Submit Questionnaire

By submitting this questionnaire, I attest that the foregoing is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and to uphold the Code Of Conduct. <https://contracostadems.com/about/code-of-conduct/>

Thank you and good luck with your campaign! We will be in touch with you to schedule your interview time.

Interviews will be scheduled by District Directors.

By submitting this questionnaire, I agree to accepting the endorsement of the DPCCC if offered. *

Yes

No

I have paid my endorsement application fee: <https://contracostadems.com/donate/> *

Yes

No

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