

# Santa Monica Democratic Club

## 2024 College Board Candidate Questionnaire

### Rob Greenstein Rader

Thank you for your interest in the Santa Monica Democratic Club endorsement. Candidates seeking the endorsement of our Club must complete and return the following questionnaire. Only registered Democrats are eligible for our consideration. Submitting this questionnaire constitutes acknowledgment that its contents are now part of the public record and may be reproduced and distributed by the Santa Monica Democratic Club.

Please send the completed questionnaire to [smdemocrats@gmail.com](mailto:smdemocrats@gmail.com) by 11:59pm on May 18, 2024. Interview appointment times with our Executive Committee will be scheduled on a first come first served basis for the weekend of May 25/26 as the questionnaires are returned.

**None of these questions shall be construed as litmus tests. There are no questions that must be answered a certain way to be considered for our endorsement.**

#### General Information

##### Candidate Name:

Rob Greenstein Rader

##### Email Address:

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##### Candidate's Current Occupation:

Santa Monica College Trustee / Professor / Attorney

##### Candidate's Employer:

Santa Monica College / Pepperdine Law School / Ovation LLC

## **Campaign Contact Person (if other than candidate):**

Please contact me directly.

Alternate contact:

Debbie Mulvaney, Treasurer

[debbiemulvaney@gmail.com](mailto:debbiemulvaney@gmail.com)

310-600-1864

### **1. What qualifications do you bring to this office?**

My public service background began as Chair of my neighborhood group, the Wilshire/Montana Neighborhood Coalition. Later, the City of Santa Monica appointed me to represent residential interests at Downtown Santa Monica, Inc., where I served as Chair, and more than a decade as Secretary-Treasurer. As Chair of the Malibu Public Facilities Authority, I was instrumental in bringing a Santa Monica College campus to Malibu. I also serve on the Board of The KCRW Foundation, the leading public radio station in the country.

Professionally, I am a digital and traditional media and entertainment attorney. Until recently, I was General Counsel of the Ovation Television Network, a 30-million household cable network that focuses on arts and culture. Before that, I was Vice President of Business & Legal Affairs at MGM Studios. For the last 20 years, I have been a Law Professor at Pepperdine (adjunct), sharing my experience with new generations of students. My graduate studies were in sociology, including education and data/statistics.

So I have unique experience in business at both public and private companies, in education, in public policy, in data and statistics, in law, in politics, that I have brought to bear on the issues SMC faces. I believe strongly that my background is of great benefit to the SMC Board of Trustees.

### **2. Why are you running?**

As the first in my family to attend college straight through, I was the beneficiary of my family's work and sacrifices so I could attend higher education. I first got involved with Santa Monica College over 22 years ago because I wanted to help all students have the same opportunities my family gave me.

My mother was a precinct captain for McGovern and took me around with her, so I've been a Democrat since I was a toddler! In summer of 1988, I was working for a Democratic Congressman (Rep. Bob Carr, D-Michigan) in DC, and I watched the Democratic National Convention with John Wilson, then Chair of the DC City Council. It was the first time I heard Reverend Jesse Jackson's stump speech. I remember it well – "They work hard every day. They take the early bus. I know they do." I joined the Dukakis/Bentsen campaign the next day and became Deputy State Director for Oregon (which we won). I have never forgotten that moment. When the opportunity came to work for President Bill Clinton on his advance team, I never looked back. As Democrats, we stand for everyone. Being a community college trustee means I get to enact that very Democratic principle of giving opportunity to every single person in our society. I am proud of that every day.

As my children Dashiell (18) and Zora (16) grow up, I recognize now more than ever how important a good education has been for me and will be for them. Because they have special needs, I recently joined the board of Bridges Academy, a "2e" school that specializes in neuro-diversity. I am as passionate as ever about maintaining our tradition of excellence at Santa Monica College and bringing us to new heights for not just my kids, but for all of our kids.

**3. What are the top issues of your campaign? How do you plan to address those issues once elected?**

Please see the Priorities question in the SMC section below (Q1).

**4. Please list all of your individual and/or organizational endorsements.**

MOST IN PROGRESS:

- California School Employees Association (CSEA) - Local 36, Executive Board (will seek)
- Los Angeles County Supervisor Lindsey Horvath (will seek)
- Congressman Ted Lieu (will seek)
- Former Los Angeles County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl (will seek).
- California State Senator Ben Allen (will seek)
- California Assembly Member Rick Chavez Zbur (will seek)
- Former Florida State Senator Kevin Rader
  
- Santa Monica College Board of Trustees Chair Margaret Quiñones-Perez
- Santa Monica College Board of Trustees Vice Chair Nancy Greenstein
- Santa Monica College Board of Trustees Susan Aminoff

- Santa Monica College Board of Trustees Sion Roy
- Santa Monica College Board of Trustees Louise Jaffe
- Santa Monica College Board of Trustees Barry Snell
- Santa Monica College Board of Trustees Tom Peters (will seek)
  
- Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board Member Jon Kean (will seek)
- Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board Member Richard Tahvildaran-Jesswein (will seek)
- Former Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board Member Ralph Mechur
  
- Former Santa Monica City Council Mayor Kevin McKeown (will seek) (will seek)
- Santa Monica City Council Member Gleam Davis
- Former Santa Monica City Council Member Ana M. Jara (will seek)
- Former Santa Monica Mayor Denny Zane (will seek)
- Former Santa Monica Mayor Judy Abdo (will seek)

Past Endorsements (currently being sought, not complete):

- Los Angeles County Democratic Party (official Democratic Party)
- Santa Monicans for Renters' Rights (SMRR)
- Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO (County Fed)
- Community for Excellent Public Schools (CEPS)
- Santa Monica College Faculty Association
- Santa Monica Democratic Club
- UNITE HERE, Local 11

## 5. How long have you lived in Santa Monica or Malibu? Where else have you lived?

Started work in Santa Monica in January, 1997 and moved to Santa Monica in June, 1999 and have lived here continually since.

Born in Detroit, Michigan and lived in Southfield, Michigan.

Also lived in:

- Florida (Hollywood; Miami; Longwood (Orlando area))
- South Carolina (Mountain Rest (Greenville))
- Massachusetts (Cambridge)
- New York (New York, Upper West Side)
- England (London)
- Texas (Dallas)

- Washington, DC
- Oregon (Portland)
- Colorado (Aspen)
- California (Stanford (Palo Alto), Beverly Hills; Los Angeles)

**6. Will you pledge to serve on the College Board for your entire four year term?**

Yes.

## **Campaign Finance**

**1. How much money have you raised for your campaign to date?**

\$3,000

**2. How much do you intend to raise by Election Day 2024?**

\$18,000

**3. Candidates for local office often choose not to take campaign contributions from particular types of organizations or industries. Are there any such sources from which you would decline donations? If so, which?**

I have not had this issue arise. For any person or entity who has business before the College, I remind them that a political contribution does not lead to any particular outcome, and that my vote is independent.

## **Party / Activism**

**1. How long have you been a registered Democrat? Have you ever been registered as a member of another political party, or as Decline To State? If so, which party and why?**

In 1985, I registered as a college freshman as a Democrat in Cambridge, Massachusetts, so 39 years as a Democrat. I have never been a member of another party. Recently, I renewed my driver's license; still a Democrat!

**2. What is your experience with political activism? Have you ever volunteered or worked for a political campaign other than your own, and if so, in what capacity were you involved?**

I have twice worked as full-time, paid staff for national Democratic Presidential campaigns:

- 1988, Dukakis/Bentsen Committee, Inc. (Deputy State Director for the State of Oregon). Supervised state headquarters for victorious Oregon campaign. Set up telephone banks for statewide calling effort. Coordinated budgeting, fund-raising and procurement of office materials. Directed cleanup and withdrawal from state.
- 1996, Clinton/Gore '96 (Advance Team Leader for President's train trip from Huntington, West Virginia to Democratic National Convention in Chicago, Illinois). Coordinated President Clinton's train trip to the Democratic National Convention. Traveled with Secret Service and prepared crowds for "spontaneous" demonstrations.

Volunteer or Unpaid Democratic Party / Candidate Activities:

- 1984, Campaign worker for Dick Batchelor, Democratic candidate for U.S. Congress, Central Florida. Campaigned with Dick Batchelor door-to-door.
- 1987, Campaign worker for David Sullivan, Democratic candidate for city council and rent control activist, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Campaigned with David Sullivan on visibility events, worked polls on election day.
- 1988, Legislative and Administrative Intern, Office of U.S. Congressman Bob Carr (Democrat), Michigan. Wrote speeches, drafted position papers, composed mass mailings, and researched legislative issues.
- 1992, Studied with (now Senator) Cory Booker at Stanford.
- 1992 – 93, Student of Professor (now Senator) Elizabeth Warren at Harvard Law School
- 2000, Campaign worker for Kevin Rader, Democratic candidate Kevin Rader for State Representative, Palm Beach and Broward Counties, Florida.
- 2002, Campaign worker for Kevin Rader, Democratic candidate (in non-partisan race), Kevin Rader for School Board, Palm Beach County, Florida.

- 2004, Elected Trustee of Santa Monica College. Endorsed by Santa Monica Democratic Club and LA County Democratic Party. Agendized numerous items consistent with the Democratic Party platform.
- 2006-8, Co-Host for Congresswoman (now Senator) Kirsten Gillibrand fundraisers, U.S. Congresswoman (Democrat) from New York.
- 2008, Re-Elected Trustee of Santa Monica College. Endorsed by Santa Monica Democratic Club and LA County Democratic Party. Agendized numerous items consistent with the Democratic Party platform.
- 2008, Campaign worker for Kevin Rader, Democratic candidate in primary, Kevin Rader for State Representative, Palm Beach County.
- 2010, Campaign worker for Kevin Rader, Democratic candidate, Kevin Rader for State Senator, Palm Beach and Broward Counties.
- 2012, Re-Elected (no opposition) Trustee of Santa Monica College. Agendized numerous items consistent with the Democratic Party platform.
- 2012, Campaign worker for Kevin Rader, Democratic candidate, Kevin Rader for State Representative, Palm Beach County
- 2013 – 2024, Consultant for OpSec Alliance, providing security and advance work for President Barack Obama, President Joseph Biden and Candidate Hillary Clinton. / Hillary for America.
- 2013 – 2024. Work with Gonring-Spahn & Associates, consultant for Democratic candidates/Democratic Party.
- 2014, Campaign worker for Kevin Rader, Democratic candidate, Kevin Rader for State Representative, Palm Beach County.
- 2015 – 2016, Worked with Patrick Murphy for Senate, candidate for U.S. Senator from Florida.
- 2016, Re-Elected Trustee of Santa Monica College. Endorsed by Santa Monica Democratic Club and LA County Democratic Party. Agendized numerous items consistent with the Democratic Party platform.

- 2016, Worked for Kevin Rader, Democratic candidate, Kevin Rader for State Senator, Palm Beach and Broward Counties.
- 2016 – present, Member of U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand’s Ideas Council, worked with then-California Attorney General Senate Candidate (now Vice President) Kamala Harris.
- 2016, Fundraiser/Supporter for Connecticut U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal.
- 2018, Fundraiser/Supporter for U.S. Congressman Ted Deutch.
- 2019, Attended/supported U.S. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi weekend to support keeping the Democratic majority.
- 2020, Re-Elected Trustee of Santa Monica College. Endorsed by Santa Monica Democratic Club and LA County Democratic Party. Agendized numerous items consistent with the Democratic Party platform.
- 2020, Fundraiser / supported President Joseph Biden.
- 2022, Attended/supported U.S. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi weekend to support keeping the Democratic majority.

**3. Which political candidates have you endorsed or supported publicly in the past? Please list as many as possible, *especially where you endorsed during a contested primary.***

Every Democratic candidate for President, California statewide office, U.S. Senator from California, U.S. Also, please see above.

**4. Have you ever signed for or publicly supported efforts to recall a public official from office? If so, please list the name(s) of the officials and why you felt they should be recalled.**

None.

**5. Please list any organizations with which you are a member, including any leadership position you have held in each organization.**

2017 – 2019, California Democratic Party Assembly Delegate. Elected to represent Santa Monica and full Assembly District in ADEM election.



2004 – present, Santa Monica Democratic Club.

2003 – present, Santa Monicans for Renters' Rights.

2004 – present, Malibu Democratic Club.

2004 – present, Democrats For Israel California.

2002 – 2021, Downtown Santa Monica, Inc. (Third Street Promenade), Board of Directors (Board Chair, Secretary-Treasurer, Chair of Finance Committee).

Responsible for finances of the most successful business improvement district with over \$1 billion in annual sales.

2013 – present, The KCRW Foundation, Board of Directors. Leading public radio station in the country, producer of "Morning Becomes Eclectic" and "Left, Right and Center".

2007 – 2013, Malibu Public Facilities Authority, Board of Directors (Chair). Led "joint powers authority" with City of Malibu to bring a public infrastructure (including Legacy Park, a stormwater treatment plant and an SMC campus) to Malibu, California.

2024 – present, Bridges Academy, Board of Directors. Leading "2e" educator for "neuro-diverse" students.

2014 – 2018, The Women in Public Service Project (part of the Global Women's Leadership Initiative at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, DC). 50x50 Champion. Worked to improve global leadership opportunities for women.

2005 – present, Pepperdine Law School Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution, Board of Advisors.

2005 – present, Pepperdine Law School Palmer Center for Entrepreneurship and the Law, Board of Advisors.

2002 – present, Wilshire/Montana Neighborhood Coalition (Chair). Led Santa Monica's largest resident organization.

2002, California Bar Association, California Lawyers Association, Intellectual Property Law Section, Executive Committee.

1994 – present, Harvard Law School Association of Los Angeles, Board Member (Speaker Co-Chair).

Member of:

- The Academy of Television Arts & Sciences
- Association of Corporate Counsel
- Federal Communications Bar Association (past member)
- Association of Media & Entertainment Counsel (past member)
- American Bar Association
- Beverly Hills Bar Association (past member)
- Los Angeles County Bar Association (past member)
- SAG-AFTRA
- Santa Monica Bar Association (past member)

**6. Please confirm that you have read the latest version of the California Democratic Party Platform, as found below. List any items in the CDP Platform with which you disagree.**

<https://cadem.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/FinalPlatform2024.pdf>

Confirmed. No meaningful disagreements noted.

## **SMC**

**1. What are your top priorities for SMC which you plan to address in this four year term?**

Priority 1: Our first priority should always be student achievement. We still have a disparity in our students' achievement, and eliminating that gap is my first priority. I take a slightly idiosyncratic position: Closing the gap is not possible unless we use data to determine what works, and then ruthlessly focus on those programs and techniques that are justified by the data.

When I first ran, I opposed “vanity programs”, ones that made us feel good but were not all that effective. I feel much the same way about how we address student achievement; we throw a lot up against the wall and just see what sticks, rather than engaging in a deliberate process that finds what works and does more of it. (Even harder is to eliminate programs that are not proven to be working.) I am likely the most data-driven trustee with a strong background in research methodology and statistics, and the College needs to re-embrace using the data. We owe it to the students to be as rigorous and data-driven as we teach them to be.

Priority 2: We have a \$5-10 million annual structural deficit. We need to “rightsize” our budget and stop spending money to chase every student when statewide demographics indicate that we are a smaller college for the near future. Adjusting to a smaller size is NEVER an easy task. I think my experience, particularly as the leading trustee on our budget and finance ad hoc committee is going to be even more important. During pandemic, we started to “chase” students and let our class sizes drop; while this may have kept access high, it was not financially sustainable. It is time to re-focus on our historical class sizes and fill rates to reduce our deficit.

Priority 3: It would be easy to say student housing is the third goal (and no doubt advantageous!). While I think it is an important goal, I would prefer to talk about 2 others (especially since I’ve already mentioned student housing below in Q4):

- a. Transition and succession for our aging staff: This is necessary because of the thin talent pool we have statewide, for senior staff and especially college presidents. We need to start planning succession, or plans will be made for us based on other people’s needs.
- b. Treatment of all parties with respect and dignity. This is the sine qua non of an academic institution; there is no dedication to truth and knowledge unless we show respect for one another and give each person her or his due. I have been disappointed in certain actions of members of our community that are not respectful and even constitute cultural erasure of other parts of our community. This cannot stand. All students need a safe environment in which to learn.

**2. Deficit-based framing like “achievement gap” can increase challenges students from marginalized backgrounds face in academic environments. More widely, deficit framing can influence how broader communities see foundational complexities of education inequity. As an SMC leader, how are you effectively shaping policy that helps students thrive and promotes healthy public debate?**

As noted above, the first step is data, data, and more data. If we do not understand what works (and what does not), it does not matter what our intentions are. So, we need a real institutional research commitment that closely looks at what programs work, what socio-economic factors affect outcomes, and how to target the right programs to those students who can benefit.

One of the most powerful methods is teaching students that they have the power to help themselves by sharing with them the power of Prof. Carol Dweck’s research on “growth mindset” – that the mind is a muscle that improves with exercise. Merely accepting that one’s current abilities are a limit does not recognize our ability for self-improvement – to

become better than we are – in fact, to learn and grow. Research indicates that when growth mindset is introduced to students, it alone can eliminate one-half (1/2) the achievement gap. I have been the strongest proponent of incorporating growth mindset into our curriculum (just as I do for my own children). I believe growth mindset can be more deeply infused into our more classes than just the current counseling class intervention. Similarly, we can incorporate GRIT (growth, resilience, integrity, and tenacity) into our program, as suggested by Prof. Angela Duckworth; these non-cognitive factors often influence outcomes more than pure academic ones.

There is no “magic bullet”. I cannot repeat that enough. I cannot repeat that enough. I believe we will need to use many small solutions (rather than one big one) and seeing which ones work. Some of the methods to focus on include:

- reducing the effects of economic disparities among students (e.g., childcare and flexible class scheduling for working students; funding for textbooks);
- eliminating barriers at our institution (whether from intentional, unconscious, or institutional bias) including by heightening sensitivity to how our attitudes and practices affect our students;
- offering more support to students (especially our students of color) through counseling and tutors, through specialized programs (such as Black Collegians Program / Umoja Community and the Latino Center for our Adelante Students, and our Title IX compliance program for gender equity);
- reducing the bureaucratic barriers that are a “hidden tax” of time and effort that prevents students from taking advantage of programs that are aimed at helping them (e.g., disabled and DACA students);
- providing more ways to take classes online, or “hybrid” in-person / online so that each student’s learning style can be best served.

Only the results will tell us which ones are most effective, and we need to keep an open mind to listen to the data.

### **3. Should SMC prioritize investments in hybrid instruction or emphasize a return to in-person instruction?**

While I think this is a “false dichotomy”, I’ll accept the premise for purposes of answering.

Because of online and hybrid class growth, we are working to reduce the actual number of classrooms on the main campus. Since the 1990s, the number of

people on the Main Campus has declined, and we want to continue to “de-densify” the campus, while upgrading the facilities, especially science, math, and technical training.

More ambitiously, I am hopeful we can truly address the goal of tailoring education to every student’s needs. Differentiated learning is the “holy grail” of education; now, it is more possible than ever before with online and AI capabilities that also do not ignore the human connection that so many students end up missing in pure online environments. I would like SMC to be a leader in creating differentiated, individualized virtual and actual classrooms that will enable each student to live up to his or her potential.

Thus, the “mix” of classroom learning will always be adjusted, depending on what our aggregate student needs are. Obviously, students are more receptive to online and hybrid learning than they used to be, so we have more of it. But, when the pendulum swings too far, as it certainly did during enforced isolation during the pandemic, we need more in-class opportunities. There is no general abstract solution to this. So, the answer to the question of whether to prioritize hybrid or in-person instruction is... Yes.

**4. Given current plans to build housing for SMC students, should priority be given to any particular groups of students (for example, unhoused students, international students, etc.)? Should there also be market rate housing for all SMC students, regardless of need?**

Ideally, I’d like ALL the housing to be affordable, as I’ve supported affordable housing my entire life. So, my preference is that we help as many students with housing needs as we can find a stable housing solution.

But, as everyone knows, we cannot afford to subsidize student housing on an operational basis; it’s simply not in the present budget which already has a massive structural deficit (Priority 2 above). If housing turns into an albatross around our neck, it could crash programs for all students. So, any housing program has to at least be self-sustaining in terms of finances and management focus.

Additionally, if we can partner with UCLA housing – which would be a home run for SMC – there will also be requirements from our partner institution who will likely bear substantial management and financing responsibilities. All of this goes to say, we are in tremendous flux about what is possible and affordable.

I know reasonable minds will disagree on what the final percentage will be, and I presume everyone has good faith about what she or he wants. So, for now I would like to ensure as high a percentage of the available SMC housing (hopefully all) as possible will be affordable and lead to a healthy and sustainable financial condition for all students to benefit from an SMC education.

##### **5. In what ways can SMC better collaborate directly with SMMUSD?**

I think we could more accurately state that we already have a fantastic collaboration with SMMUSD; what can we improve and how do we better communicate all we do together?

The most recent study I saw showed that over 50% of Santa Monica High School graduates attend at least some classes at SMC within 4 years of graduation (which is an outstanding number). In fact, both of my high school children have taken classes at SMC in the last year. Even more amazing is that Santa Monica College has had the highest rate of local participation of any community college in the State of California, according to the Chancellor's Office. The most recent studies I saw indicate that over 50% of Santa Monica residents have either taken or had a family member take a class at SMC in the last 5 years.

We have built on this great integration into the local community with programs like Santa Monica Promise (free enrollment and textbooks for local students) and the Young Collegians (high school students in underrepresented groups to prepare for college). During pandemic, many local students took additional SMC classes (including both of my kids).

We continue to partner with SMMUSD all the time. Presently, the District's Project Based Learning program is based on the SMC Main Campus. And, just this month in our May 2024 meeting, we extended the John Muir / SMASH agreement to use the SMC campus while the elementary schools' campus is being remediated (until fall of 2025)

Personally, I believe we can work with SMMUSD to inculcate a desire to go to college and a love of learning, by bringing students on to SMC for perhaps a student's first visit to a college campus. I strongly believe that trips to SMC's planetarium, to the Broad Stage, to the campus generally, all create a vision of a future that involves education for the visiting students, no matter what their age.

Finally, I believe that the Santa Monica Early Childhood Lab School has increased our cooperation with SMMUSD greatly.

## Social Justice

### **1. What can SMC do to better implement social justice instruction and otherwise address equity issues?**

Social justice is infused throughout our curriculum and is present in everything we do. We put our money where our mouth is in putting resources towards being / becoming a fair and just institution. Last year's Public Policy Institute featured Heather McGhee and her work *THE SUM OF US*, which I read as did many of the trustees. This was a very well-attended group of talks that really spread a strong message of social justice in the community.

One of the issues I noted recently at a Board meeting was how our bureaucratic forms impose a "tax on time" for those who are most disadvantaged. I believe many of our programs end up being too rule-driven and don't help students unless the right paperwork is filled out, or the right department is approached. So often, we ignore the implementation of the programs because that is not the part that is most interesting to activists. If a student can't get the forms filled out for financial aid, then all the social justice rhetoric in the world does not matter.

Finally, I have taken the lead in noting how our Jewish students were NOT included in our Equity Center (see Q4 below), and have repeatedly asked for a list of the programs to help all students, including Jews. SMC still has great problems in letting go of stereotypes about Jews, including that Jews do not need to be included in social justice and equity. Similarly, the entire world also has a problem treating the world's only Jewish state the same way it treats other nation-states. This differential treatment is inherently problematic, and we would not tolerate it if supposedly neutral standards were applied differently to various countries. Nor would we tolerate

### **2. How can SMC respond to potentially disruptive on-campus protests, balancing the free speech rights of students with the safety of others who feel targeted by their actions and rhetoric?**

SMC has learned from prior incidents and what other schools have done wrong. There are many solutions (often overly technical) that often boil down to 4 words: "planning for the worst". I have actually reached out to many historic activists to see how they were treated, and what their expectations about student protest were (as students) and how we can balance these concerns.

As an educational institution, our primary concern is creating a safe space for students to learn. I put that above all else. Many slogans and symbols (including the swastikas currently being removed from UCLA and USC) are a form of “hate speech” that is not protected. We have put enormous effort into protecting students from “micro-aggressions” but have not applied these lessons uniformly. We need to put in neutral rules (which we have) and then apply them evenhandedly. Thankfully, our Police Chief Johnnie Adams is unbelievably experienced in sensitive student matters. I think how we handled the 2 events this past week, and the 1 event the prior week are textbook examples of how to plan and to prepare for campus events that could be disruptive. Chief Adams spearheaded a successful plan, and I understand that the Chief and our students took pictures together at the events!

In the past, Jewish students have approached me after Board meetings about their fears and concerns. I have worked to make sure these concerns were addressed. Similarly, when Palestinian students have come to Board meetings, I have assured them that we do not tolerate Islamophobia. Recently, we put on programs about both these issues.

**3. How would you use your position on the College Board to assist systematically disadvantaged groups of residents of Santa Monica?**

At SMC, we have fought very hard to ensure that we reflect the diversity of Santa Monica. As noted in Q5 above in the SMC section above, I shared some of the data on how deeply SMC’s connections are to the local community with the highest level of local participation in the State of California.

We have tried hard to institutionalize special programs for disadvantaged groups in Santa Monica, including the Young Collegians program for high school students from groups who have traditionally been underrepresented and Santa Monica Promise for recent graduates of California high schools. For many years now, we have collaborated with the City of Santa Monica on the Pico Partnership aimed at meeting the needs of residents of the Pico Neighborhood. We have Maximizing Achievement in STEM (MÁS) for students pursuing STEM studies / careers.

I have personally supported these programs, including by speaking out against unfair treatment of any of our students, including DACA, African-American students, Asian and Pacific Islander students, and, most recently, Jewish students. Often, I will ask the tough questions that otherwise do not get asked, including on program effectiveness for our most vulnerable students. I am proud of what SMC did for our food-insecure students, especially during the pandemic crisis, by being a food distribution center including on Thanksgiving.



**4. In light of anti-DEI practices across the nation and state, how is SMC encouraging opportunity based on place and promoting more equitable approaches to public education?**

In March, I was interviewed by the Minority Corporate Counsel Association's former President Joe West for his podcast on DEI. Very kindly, Joe shared with me that it was his best interview ever, perhaps because of my deep involvement in DEI, both professionally and as part of my public service, to increase opportunity – for students and for employees.

Although I am not an expert in the place / equity dialogue (but I look forward to any articles or education you can provide!), I have to note that Santa Monica College's very existence is a testament to sharing the opportunities and resources of our education-focused and relatively affluent community beyond the borders of Santa Monica and Malibu. SMC was a lead college in bringing "free-flow" to the California Community College system so that students from anywhere can attend and enjoy the benefits of our college and its top-level transfer and workforce development.

Not only is SMC the number one transfer school in the state for 33 years, we are number one for both Hispanic and African-American students for the UC system. We have numerous programs that focus on helping students who come from different backgrounds (based on all sorts of criteria, from first-generation college to race to immigration status) to achieve their educational goals – in STEM education, in workforce development, in almost all our programs.

Recently, we added an Equity Center (see Q1 above) that focuses on 4 areas: Gender; Racial Justice; Undocumented; and PRIDE to complement what we do at our Latino Center / Adelante Program and the Black Collegians / Umoja Community, and our support of APIDA (Asian Pacific Islander Desi American) and our specialty programs for CalWORKS, Men of Color, and others. So, we continue to work to have as inclusive a campus as possible.

**Ballot Measures**

**Do you support the Justice For Renters Act?**

Yes.

**Do you support the repeal of Article 34?**

I support, as I disfavor putting low-rent housing on the ballot. Having appropriate protections for size, density, etc., should be dealt with separately.

**Do you support the initiative to require new local taxes to pass by a two-thirds vote?**

No.

**Do you support the potential measure to amend Prop 47?**

Strong lean against. I'd like to hear the arguments more fleshed out, but I am getting the feeling that big retailers are driving this without much data demonstrating an increase in crime attributable to the original Prop. 47, especially since California has such a low threshold for prosecuting retail theft as a felony.

**Do you support the proposed amendments to Measure GS to exempt multifamily housing?**

I supported the original Measure GS, and I continue to do so; I do not support proposed changes to Measure GS.

**Additional Questions**

**1. What role do you believe the Santa Monica Democratic Club should have in our City?**

I've always felt that the Santa Monica Democratic Club performed a service by acting as a "conscience" for the City. I believe it also has a strong educational component by having speakers and events that educate so many of our citizens.

As a 20+-year member, I recall when we endorsed Dennis Kucinich for President in 2004! We were bold then, and we can continue to be bold. I look forward to more discussions of important issues such as universal income and single-payer healthcare (which I put on the SMD agenda when Sheila Kuehl was our State Senator).

**2. If elected, how would you attempt to interact with the Santa Monica Democratic Club and other political organizations to ensure community buy-in on new proposals?**

I speak regularly to the leadership of the Santa Monica Democratic Club to keep in touch with their views and thoughts. When there is a particular issue, I reach out.

Similarly, when they have an issue I expect them to reach out to me, to let me know what their concerns are. In the past, my fellow trustees and I have presented to the SMDC at meetings, too. I'd welcome more opportunities!

### **3. What is the most important topic that was left off of this questionnaire?**

Here' are a few:

- a. I think we could have a discussion on our workforce development programs more broadly. hile I have been a strong proponent of our "Strong Workforce Program" in LA County as a consortium of all the community colleges and in partnership with the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation, I have also criticized the way most funds are spent far away from the classroom and students. I believe there are tough choices there and in our overly pedagogy-centered approach to creating a 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce. In many respects, trying to frontload development of curriculum in ever-changing fields (especially with a technological component) is putting the cart before the horse.
- b. We could discuss the barriers to creating more bachelor's degrees at community colleges. When Gov. Jerry Brown first sought to free community colleges to offer bachelor's degrees, it was based on dire forecasts of the predicted shortage of graduates with bachelor's degrees in California, approximately one million. We have made relatively little progress because of the bureaucratized method and restrictive view of the California Master Plan for Education. If we are serious, let's act that way.
- c. We should have a long discussion on California's student funding formula which pays on certain specified stoutcomes (degrees; certificates; transfers). This has threatened most of the California Community College System. Bottom line, for the least-funded part of our K-16 system, this further undermines our financial stability. It really bears some thought on what we hope to accomplish with commumity colleges.