

Newsletter of the Stanislaus County Commission for Women Special Election Edition October 2020

Message from our President

Dear Members and Friends of SCCW,

In 1979, a group of women in a pizza parlor recognized that only collective action would alleviate inequities facing women in the workplace and in the home. These women founded the Stanislaus County Commission for Women to promote women and their accomplishments, while also raising an awareness of issues that concern women of all ages, ethnicity, sexual orientation, economic background and beliefs.

In 2020, a group of like-minded women met over Zoom to advance their work. Although the times have changed, the issues remain the same:

- women make just 78 cents for every dollar earned by men. Black women earn only 64 cents and Latinas only 54 cents for each dollar earned by white men;
- the U.S. Department of Justice reports that approximately one in four homeless women is homeless because of violence committed against her;
- the US is one of only eight countries in the world that does not provide any form of paid maternity leave; and,
- women are 51% of the population, but make up only 23% of the US House of Representatives.

Although we've come a long way, issues of pay equity, domestic violence, maternal health, reproductive rights, and political representation persist and SCCW will do our part to advocate for policies that increase equity and advance the role of women across systems and sectors.

In August, our board hosted a virtual retreat to set priorities for the year and to identify new ways to advance our mission. Given the public health crisis and the ramifications that entail, we will adapt our approach, but maintain our commitment to recognize the work

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Mission Statement:
Stanislaus County Commission for Women is committed to supporting a coordinated effort by concerned groups and individuals in Stanislaus County to more develop fully the potential of all women.

We support:

- Pro-Choice and reproductive Rights
- Gender pay equity
- Adequate funding for women and children's health issues and research
- Ending violence against women
- Adequate, safe and affordable child care and other child care issues
- Anti-discrimination based on sexual orientation

www.stanislauswomen.net

MEET OUR BOARD MEMBERS

We have many new members of our board. When asked, "What do you bring to the SCCW board?" the answers are diverse and intriguing.

Please read about these dedicated women:

Amanda Hughes brings a deep contextual knowledge of local issues and experience with aligning partners around system change efforts. She has worked in philanthropy for over 8 years and now oversees community leadership initiatives and nurtures relationships with area charitable organizations, community groups, and public agencies. Her professional background is primarily with nonprofits, with experience as a grant writer for a social service agency providing direct support for survivors of domestic violence and public relations support for an organization providing end of life care. *"I have deep empathy for the role of nonprofits to improve the lives of our county's most vulnerable populations, including women and children."*

Jessica Self brings a sense of humor and keen political sense. She has a large breadth of experience serving on community boards. *"My work as a lawyer for our indigent community members provides valuable context and a critical eye to all of our actions."*

Erin Black loves our community and brings a connection to youth and art to the SCCW. She is focused on diversity in local programming and recognition of women and views true leadership through a lens of equity. *"I want to create open dialogue for race relations and bridge the gap of opportunities available to all socioeconomic classes and minorities."* With a passion for ensuring all women's issues are heard and addressed, Erin attends law school and plans to practice law here.

Ruhi Sheikh shares her perspective as a woman of color, a mother and a community builder. She is focused on ensuring that women of color are always seated at the SCCW table, as well as other organizations. *"Diverse perspectives must always be considered when change is on the horizon."*

Jane Manley is a member of many years and a retired educator. She brings institutional memory and historical knowledge of the SCCW to the board. *"I am proud to be part of an organization that honors women and has done so for more than 40 years."*

Jennie Sweeney brings the perspective of an educator who has committed herself to teaching students about issues of inequality and opportunity in our nation. She was fortunate to discuss the fall of communism with Sergei Khrushchev, son of Nikita Khrushchev, and civil rights with Christine King Farris, sister of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Always a teacher, she asked each what message they would like her to share with her students. They asked her to encourage students to see themselves capable of social change. *"I want students to see my brother, not as some kind of superhero, but as a normal man who saw inequity from the time he was a little boy and decided to do something about it. I want your students to know they are no different than Martin; they can do what he did in their own way."* -Christine Farris King

Stella Beratlis is a librarian, poet, and teacher who has worked in public and academic library settings for the past decade. She brings a commitment to information literacy, civic engagement, and the literary arts as important elements of a vibrant community. As the daughter of an immigrant and a butcher, she recognizes her incredible luck/unearned privilege and therefore has a commitment to active anti-oppression and intersectional feminism. She wants to connect MJC, where she works, to organizations and nonprofits in the community. *“I love doing website things and social media marketing for nonprofits. Nothing gives me greater pleasure than to engage my network to facilitate the joining of forces that leads to good work in our community.”*

Gillian Wegener brings a strong volunteer spirit to the board. She knows that through advocacy and hard work, things can get better. Born on a Presidential Election day many years ago, she really likes voting and can't wait until November. *“If you think something isn't working, you should work to make it better.”*

Jenny Tang has experience in strategic development, community organizing, and general business - marketing, partnerships, data analysis, web design, and a creative eye for events and spaces. *“I also bring a bit of an international and urban perspective, having worked and lived in Beijing and San Francisco for several years.”*

Theresa Spezzano has done extensive public health research, focusing on agriculture and maternal/child health. Her passion is promoting women in our community. *“My favorite part about working at UC Merced is mentoring young women entering Public Health. I have the opportunity to link many of them to positions and internships in Stanislaus County, including HSA, King-Kennedy Center, Opportunity Stanislaus, and Modesto City Schools. These women will soon be the leaders in our community.”*

Karina Jauregui has a passion for creative outlets and is dedicated to helping youth in our community. She brings to the SCCW a desire to pursue environmental and social justice practices and an awareness of the various cultures in our county. *“Find joy in the little things.”*

Nancy Fisher has the perspective of a woman who came of age in the 1960s. She saw the gains in women's rights, gay rights and civil rights that people fought hard for and how easily they can be lost, especially when there is complacency at election time. She also brings the perspective of a wife, mother, grandmother and a public health nurse who spent a career focused on maternal and child health and services for people with HIV/AIDS. *“I know better than to take gains for granted or to assume progress will continue without our participation in the process.”*

Yashlee Nazi brings compassion, humility, empathy, life experience, and hopefulness, thinking of what is needed by the most vulnerable in our community. *“I am inspired by the work women in our county have put in for generations and I hope that this group continues to make positive and progressive change.”* Outside of the SCCW, she works as a nurse, privileged to care for all kinds of people - taking this to heart, especially at such a critical time. She believes in the power of change and that we have the responsibility to think of others always. *“I encourage everyone to get informed about the upcoming election and to please vote—our world depends on it.”*

WHO'S RUNNING FOR OFFICE? WOMEN ARE!

As part of our Mission, the SCCW is “committed to supporting a coordinated effort by concerned groups and individuals in Stanislaus County to more develop fully the potential of all women.” This includes informing our community when women step up to leadership positions. The names below are the record-breaking number of women who are stepping up in exactly that way this election season. While the SCCW does not endorse candidates, we wanted you to know about them. Contact them directly if you are interested in their campaigns. Note the four candidates who were named Outstanding Women by the SCCW: Lindsey Bird, Mary Ann Sanders, Kimberly Gerber Spina, and Sue Zwahlen.

OFFICE	NAME
STATE	
Calif. State Senate, District 5	Susan Talamantes Eggman
CITIES	
Ceres City Council, District 3	Brandy D. Meyer
Ceres Treasurer	Kayla Martinez
Ceres Treasurer	Sopheap Dong-Carreon
Modesto Mayor	Kristi Ah You
Modesto Mayor	Sue Zwahlen*
Modesto Mayor	Erin Sommer Tenorio
Modesto City Council, District 1	Rosa Escutia-Braaton
Modesto City Council, District 1	Jennifer Hidalgo
Modesto City Council, District 3	Janice Keating
Modesto City Council, District 6	Jessica Gonzalez
Newman Treasurer	Mary M. Moore
Oakdale City Council	Cecilia A. Suarez
Oakdale City Council	Ericka Chiara
Oakdale Treasurer	Maria L. Wilson
Patterson City Council, District C	Shivaugn Alves
Patterson City Council, District C	Shawun Ruth Anderson
Riverbank City Council, District 2	Rachel Hernandez
Riverbank City Council, District 2	Cindy Fosi
Turlock City Council, District 2	Rebecka Monez

Turlock City Council, District 4	Pam Franco
Turlock Treasurer	Diana Lewis
Waterford City Council	Jill Kitchens
EDUCATION	
Empire Union School District, Area 2	Carole Dovichi
Newman-Crows Landing Unified, Area 1	Janice Conforti
Salida Union School District, Area 3	Maria Elena Magaña
Salida Union School District, Area 2	Susan Elliott
Salida Union School District, Area 2	Lidia Banda
Stanislaus County Board of Ed, Area 3	Kimberly Gerber Spina*
Stanislaus County Board of Ed, Area 3	Tracie Anderson
Stanislaus County Board of Ed, Area 4	Mary Ann Sanders*
Turlock Unified School District, Area 1	Miranda Chalabi
Turlock Unified School District, Area 1	Jaimee Leigh Ellison
Yosemite Comm College District, Area 3	Sharokina Shams
Yosemite Comm College District, Area 5	Rosalio Rubio
Yosemite Comm College District, Area 6	Leslie Beggs
Yosemite Comm College District, Area 6	Lindsey Bird*
Yosemite Comm College District, Area 7	Sarah Ford
COMMUNITY SERVICES	
Monterey Park Tract	Susan L. Stransky
Monterey Park Tract	Jerry Ann Gradford
IRRIGATION DISTRICTS	
Modesto Irrigation District, Division 1	Suzy Powell-Roos
Oakdale Irrigation District, Division 4	Linda Santos
HOSPITAL DISTRICTS	
Del Puerto Health Care District	Anne Ielmini Stokman

* Named as an Outstanding Woman by the SCCW.

President's Message, continued:

outstanding women do in our community and raise awareness of issues and causes that concern women.

This year, our priorities will be to:

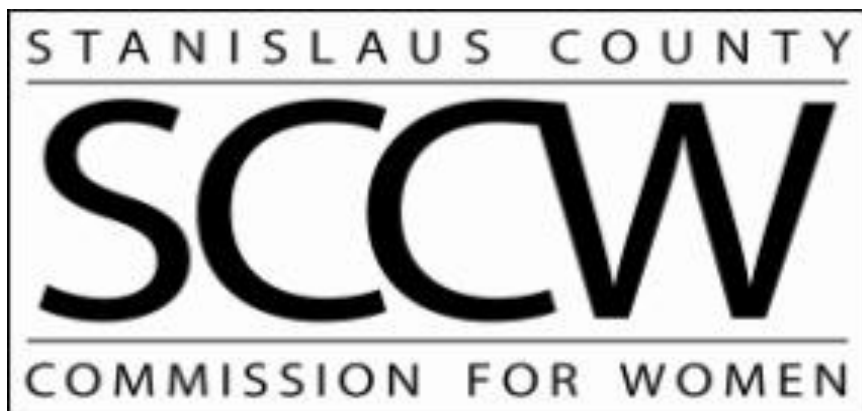
- **Collaborate** - We will initiate and deepen collaborations with other organizations and groups that work to support women and children in Stanislaus County.
- **Connect** - We will create fun and joyful opportunities for women to connect and socialize in the virtual space as a way to build community and provide emotional support.
- **Communicate**- We will utilize our newsletter and social media presence to elevate the voices of women most affected by the myriad crises at hand.

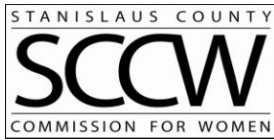
As the incoming president of SCCW, I am honored to follow in the footsteps of the incredible women who have led and served the Commission before me. Thank you to my fellow board members who volunteer their time and creative energy to support women's advocacy efforts, and welcome to the new board members that joined in 2020, including Stella Beratlis, Erin Black, Karina Juaregui, and Jenny Tang. We're grateful for the unique perspectives that each of these women brings to the Commission and the innovations that will emerge from their participation.

Finally, voting has never been more important than it is this November. Please send in your mail-in ballot early and encourage your friends and family to do the same. In an election year that can turn the tide of our democracy one way or another, every vote counts.

Sincerely,

Amanda Hughes, SCCW President





Board Members for 2020 - 2021

President –Amanda Hughes

Vice President Community Relations – Gillian Wegener

Vice President Program – Jessica Self

Vice President Membership – Ruhi Sheikh

Immediate Past President – Jennie Sweeney

Treasurer – Theresa Spezzano

Secretary – Nancy Fisher

Newsletter Editor – Jane Manley

Members at Large – Stella Beratlis, Erin Black, Karina Juaregui,
Jenny Tang

Ad Hoc Membership & Tech Assistance - Yashlee Nazi

Stanislaus County Commission for Women

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Return Service Requested

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