

EMPOWERED VOICES

WOMEN DEMOCRATS OF SACRAMENTO COUNTY

Issue 14 — Fourteenth Edition



April - May 2026

"I raise my voice—not so that I can shout but so that those without a voice can be heard... we cannot succeed when half of us are held back." Malala Yousafzai

Message from the President



DEMOCRACY Demands More of Us

There are moments in history when we must ask ourselves: *What*

will we do when democracy is tested? The recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling in Louisiana v. Callais has raised deep national concerns over voting protections by limiting how Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act can be used to challenge congressional maps designed to protect minority representation in America.

Many believe this ruling could weaken key voting-rights protections and shape fair representation for years to come. For many Americans—especially communities whose families marched, sacrificed, suffered violence, and even lost loved ones for the sacred right to vote—this ruling feels deeply painful. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was born from courage, struggle, sacrifice, and relentless organizing.

People marched across bridges, endured intimidation, and gave their lives so future generations could cast a ballot freely and fairly. To many, recent court rulings represent another chapter in an ongoing struggle over equal political representation and voting access.

The struggle for democracy has never been easy—and it is not over. We have marched.

We have spoken out. We have felt anger, disbelief, and frustration.

But history teaches us this truth: after emotion--after outrage--must come **action and organization**.

The question before us is not only *What happened?* The question is: ***What will we do next?***

As women committed to democracy, we cannot grow discouraged. We must rise, organize, educate, mobilize—and vote. We cannot surrender our voices. If democracy feels under attack, then our response must be stronger participation, stronger organizing, and stronger community engagement. We cannot allow discouragement to silence us. We must turn disappointment into determination, frustration into focus, and passion into meaningful action.

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SAVE THE MONTHLY MEETING DATES!

Every third Monday, 6:30 pm to 8 pm
Sacramento City Teachers Association
5300 Elvas Avenue, Sac., CA 95819



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President's Message, cont'd from page 1

Our work begins in neighborhoods, apartment complexes, churches, schools, senior communities, barber shops, beauty salons, community centers, with our children and grandchildren, and at family gatherings. It begins with conversations. It begins with helping people register, understand elections—how to vote and who to vote for, and encouraging participation.

We must help every eligible voter understand that their voice matters and that democracy depends on participation. And yes, many in our organization feel urgency about opposing policies of the Trump administration and the importance of advancing Democratic priorities through civic engagement and elections. In a democracy, power comes through organizing, persuasion, voter participation, and lawful civic action—not despair.

Democracy is not passive. Change happens when ordinary people organize, educate, mobilize, and vote. As members of the Women Democrats of Sacramento County, we must turn our anger into action, our disappointment into determination, and our passion into purpose. If we are concerned about the future of democracy, then our response must be stronger civic participation, stronger organizing, and stronger voter engagement. **We have the power to change the leadership of this nation.**

Women Dems at DPSC Spring Fundraiser with Senate President Pro Tempore Monique Limón



L-R: Nikki Milevsky, Brenda Borge, Eric Wiesenthal, Pam Dominisse, Dawn Basciano, Sen. Monique Limón, Debbie Richardson, Sandra Hazel

Women Dems Call to Action: Turning Passion into Purpose.

Here is how we step up:

1. Register New Voters

Commit to helping register at least **10 or more new voters** in your community before the next election cycle.

2. Adopt a Neighborhood

Volunteer to organize outreach in a local neighborhood, apartment complex, senior residence, or community gathering space.

3. Build Community Voter Teams

Create neighborhood phone banking, text teams, and volunteer groups to remind people about registration deadlines, mail ballots, and election dates.

4. Educate, Don't Assume

Host civic engagement conversations, coffee chats, or mini-democracy forums explaining why local, state, and national elections matter.

5. Reach Young Voters

Partner with youth organizations, colleges, and families to help young adults understand registration and voting processes.

6. Protect the Vote

Volunteer to support voter education, transportation to the polls, and ballot-return awareness.

7. Show Up Locally

Attend city council, school board, and county Board of Supervisor meetings. Democracy grows where citizens participate.

8. Bring a Friend to Every Event

Every WDSC member should invite at least one new person into civic engagement and community action. Bring a friend to our meetings and events!

9. Stay Organized, Not Discouraged

Channel anger into strategy. Channel frustration into action. Channel heartbreak into hope.

10. Vote—and Help Others Vote

Encourage voting plans: register, verify status, complete mail ballots on time, or make a plan to vote in person.

Let us turn our anger into action, our passion into purpose, and our voices into power. Democracy depends on ordinary people doing extraordinary things together.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AWARENESS, PREVENTION & HEALING

BY ZIGGY CLAVERE

Sexual Violence Awareness, Prevention, & Healing PANEL Q&A

Date: 04/16/2026
Time: 12:00pm-2:00pm
Location: Hinde Auditorium



Brianna Michelle | She/Her
CEO, Founder Voices Beyond
Assault (VBA), Supermodel,
Actress, Sexual Assault
Survivor



Aarefah Mosavi | She/Her
UC Berkeley Alum, Human Rights
Advocate, RAINN Courage
Community Member, Sexual
Assault Survivor



Ziggy Clavere | They/Them
Undergraduate Student in
Political Science, Sac County
Women's Democrats Intern, Drag
Artist, Sexual Assault Survivor



Dr. Riana Pella | She/They
Assistant Professor,
Undergraduate Studies in
Education | Sacramento State
University



Dr. Joanna Nuñez | She/Her
Assistant Professor, Women's
and Gender Studies |
Sacramento State University



**Professor Jasmine Ali |
She/Her**
LCSW, MSW
Lecturer, School of Social
Work | Sacramento State
University

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supported by:

On April 16, 2026, the Sacramento State Women and Gender Studies Club hosted a Sexual Assault Awareness and Healing panel bringing together students, faculty, and community members for a discussion on sexual violence awareness, survivor support, and healing.

This panel featured a range of speakers, including faculty members, student leaders, and survivors, who all shared their perspectives on the impact of sexual violence--and the importance of continued education/advocacy within campus communities.

Panelists included Women Dems intern Ziggy Clavere amongst the student voices that contributed to the discussion. The program began with opening statements from each panelist, followed by a moderated Q&A session that allowed audience members to engage directly with speakers.

Throughout the event, conversations highlighted both progress in raising awareness around sexual assault and the current ongoing challenges survivors face--including barriers to reporting sexual assault and accessing survivor support systems. Panelists emphasized to the audience the importance of continued dialogue, education, and community-centered approaches to prevention and healing.

A central theme of the panel was the importance of centering survivor experiences and creating spaces where individuals feel supported in sharing their stories. The discussion also reflected an intersectional approach to understanding sexual violence and its impacts across different identities and communities.

The event concluded with a call for continued engagement and advocacy, reinforcing the importance of ongoing education and open dialogue surrounding sexual assault on college campuses. Women Dems President Debbie Richardson attended in support of the panel and its broader mission of community awareness and survivor-centered advocacy.



Pictured far right: Ziggy Clavere

WOMEN AT THEIR BEST! CONGRATULATIONS!

Senator Monique Limón Senate President Pro Tempore

State Senator Monique Limón of Santa Barbara was elected by members of the California State Senate as the **President Pro Tempore** for the California State Senate. She is the first Latina and woman to ever serve in that capacity.

One of her top priorities is ensuring that the state spends taxpayer dollars well and that the public feels we are good stewards of their money.

Limón also has concerns about the ICE raids under the Trump administration. She states, in part, "...there are members of this community who feel the uncertainty, the fear, concern about safety issues..."

Senator Limón was a member of the Santa Barbara Unified School District Board before being elected to the California Legislature in 2016.



<https://sd21.senate.ca.gov/>

Senator Angelique Ashby Capital Caucus Chair

In January of this year, the **Capital Caucus Foundation** members elected Senate Majority Leader Angelique Ashby of Sacramento as their Chair.

The Capital Caucus was recently established to bring legislators from the greater capital region together to drive progress for shared goals.

The bipartisan group of eight members is committed to working collaboratively on issues such as: infrastructure, economic opportunity, flood control, health care, and climate initiatives.

Longtime Women Dems member and supporter, **Assemblymember Maggie Krell will serve as Vice Chair.**



<https://www.capcaucus.co>

Alice Montes-Christopher Woman of the Year

Alice became a member of Women Dems in March of this year. She has been a member of the Feminist Democrats since 2017 and has served in numerous positions before serving as their president from 2023-26. She is a Government Relations Advocate for SEIU-UHW.

Alice was named **2026 Woman of the Year for Assembly District 6** by Assemblymember Maggie Krell.

Alice says that her family is her motivation for political involvement. "I experienced firsthand what it's like not to have accessible, reliable transportation, healthy, affordable and nutritional foods, quality healthcare and stable housing. I have had the opportunity to work on statewide policy and make the life of everyday and underrepresented Californians better."



L-R: Terra Christopher, Kyle Christopher (Alice's spouse), Alice, and Assemblywoman



The 1969 Stonewall Riots

The hub of the New York City (NYC) gay community in the 1960s was undeniably the Stonewall Inn. Located in Greenwich Village, it was one of the only places where the community could gather, dance, and be themselves freely.

Laws criminalized same-sex relations and gender-nonconforming attire, leading to constant police raids on gay establishments.

The Stonewall Riots began in the early hours of June 28, 1969, when NYC police raided the Stonewall Inn with the pretext that they were operating without a proper liquor license. However, the real purpose was to enforce the laws against homosexuality.

The raid sparked a riot among bar patrons and neighborhood residents as police roughly hauled employees and patrons out of the bar. What began as a defiant refusal by patrons to endure further harassment blossomed into days of protests and clashes with law enforcement.



The
Stonewall
Inn

Ironically, the Stonewall Riots catalyzed the LGBTQ+ movement in the United States, particularly in the politically progressive state of California, and around the world. <https://www.history.com/>

San Francisco has many reasons to be proud of its essential role in the gay rights movement. It had the first gay bar, the first pride parade, and the nation's first issued same-sex marriage license.

On February 12, 2004, in SF under the direction of then-Mayor Gavin Newsom, marriage licenses were issued to same-sex couples. Eventually, more than 4,000 lesbian and gay couples obtained marriage licenses. This day was named "The Winter of Love."



Love had won that day!

Pride Month, celebrated in June in the U.S. is an annual celebration of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer identity. Pride Month typically includes marches, events and parades with colorful floats.

The rainbow flag (initially with eight colors) is a recognized symbol of LGBTQ pride, designed by San Francisco artist Gilbert Baker in 1978. The official six-color flag represents each color as **red for life**, **orange for healing**, **yellow for sunshine**, **green for nature** and **purple for spirit**.



Sacramento Pride Parade



PREVALENT WOMEN'S ISSUES

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS FOR MIFEPRISTONE

In May of 2026, the U.S. Supreme Court temporarily allowed mail access to the abortion pill, Mifepristone.

The vote was seven for the pill and two dissenters, Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas.

Louisiana filed a lawsuit against the Food and Drug Administration that threatened to cut off mail access for women nationwide, including states where abortion is legal. Currently, Mifepristone can be obtained in a medical health center, in person, or via telehealth, where the patient can receive it in the mail.

Mifepristone, when combined with misoprostol, can safely cause abortions for pregnancies of less than ten weeks. If the lawsuit succeeds, many women would face significant hurdles, meaning patients would have to travel to a health center to obtain the medication. Medication accounts for two-thirds of abortions.



SEXUAL HARASSMENT & VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Sexual harassment (SH) is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature.

Harassment is illegal when it's frequent or so severe that it creates a hostile work environment. It can also include an adverse employment decision.

Quid pro quo harassment is when a supervisor seeks sexual favors from a worker in return for some job benefit. This will generally warrant the result of a hostile work environment.

In the U.S., women have experienced:

- (2015) Completed or attempted rape = 21%
- Sexual coercion = 16%-20%
- Unwanted sexual contact = 39%

81% of women have experienced some form of SH and/or assault in their lifetime.

www.nsvrc.org/statistics

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery. Victims are used for both sexual and non-sexual work.

Sex trafficking, as defined by the Department of Homeland Security, is "The recruitment, harboring, transportation...for the purpose of a commercial sex act...induced by force, fraud or coercion..."

Some of the most common places traffickers operate are in bars, illicit massage parlors, hotels, and truck stops. They use social media to recruit, advertise, and exploit victims.

Anyone can be vulnerable, but those of increased risk include children in the foster care system, the homeless, and people living in poverty.

Victims suffer from medical conditions, mental health issues like depression, and financial losses.

A victim does not have to cross national borders to be considered trafficked, as many victims are U.S. citizens.

<https://www.dhs.gov>

Women Dems in the Community



- ♦ **Central Labor Council
Crab Feed Fundraiser**
(Top left)
- ♦ **Endorsed Candidate
Dr. Flo Cofer Fundraiser**
(Bottom left)
- ♦ **Fem Dems
Cameras! Lights! Action!
Fundraiser**
(Top right)



WOMEN DEMOCRATS OF SACRAMENTO COUNTY

ICE CREAM

SOCIAL



5:30pm -
7:30pm

Monday

20 July 2026

TICKETS
ON SALE
NOW!

MEMBERS: \$25
NON-MEMBERS: \$35
SPONSORSHIPS
AVAILABLE

at Sierra 2 Center (Curtis Hall)
2791 24th St., Sacramento, CA



Bring the entire family for fun, laughter & our **Silent Auction!**

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/wdscicecream2026>



sacramentowomendems@gmail.com



sacramentowomendems.org



Voting for the California primaries has begun!
Election Day is Tuesday, June 2, 2026.

The Women Dems have completed the endorsement process for the 2026 Election Primaries.

. To see endorsed candidates, please visit our website at

<https://www.sacramentowomendems.org/>



Do you have any high school or college graduates to announce to Women Dems members? Let us know by emailing the graduate's name, photo and the name of the school.



WOMEN DEMS SEEKING VOLUNTEERS!



ICE CREAM SOCIAL - JULY 20, 2026

- Silent auction donations
- Obtaining sponsors
- Day of event set-up/break-down

BYLAWS COMMITTEE - 2026-2027

- Six to nine-month commitment

CELEBRATE N. SACRAMENTO - JUNE 6, 2026

- Recruitment/information booth

CALIFORNIA STATE FAIR - JULY/AUG 2026

- Recruitment/information booth

WOMEN DEMS PHONE BANKING

- Checking in with members

If interested in volunteering,
please email WDSC at the address below.