



*Close the Gap wishes good health, relative calm, and a solid dose of silver linings to all our committed supporters and allies, as we navigate the COVID-19 pandemic together. We are thankful that our statewide team has years of practice working remotely, and we continue to stay busy recruiting for the 2022 cycle.*

*During this period of shelter-in-place, we invite you to dive into the resources we've stockpiled on our website. Potential women candidates and their allies should take a look at: [pointers](#) for running, lists of top notch [consultants](#) and [PACs](#), and past [webinars](#).*

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## UPDATE

# MARCH PRIMARY: SLOW & STEADY PROGRESS FOR WOMEN

In our [last Alert](#), we shared a handful of toplines coming out of the March 2020 Primary. Here are some more takeaways as results have finalized:

➔ **More women ran for the CA Legislature in 2020 than in 2018.**

Women made up 38% of candidates running for seats in 2020, up from 31% in 2018. This forward motion was not guaranteed, given the relatively small number of open and swingable seats in 2020. An uptick in GOP women in 2020 made the partisan split among women candidates slightly less dramatic than in 2018, but the field remains overwhelmingly Democratic.

→ **Tough territory remains tough.**

In AD 17 through AD 33, no Democratic woman is advancing to the top two. This region, which includes Silicon Valley, but extends much further, has [historically been tough territory](#) for women candidates, despite the Bay Area's progressive reputation.

→ **More women are stepping forward to run in rural northern California, the Central Valley and the Inland Empire.**

Encouragingly, here is turf that has historically been light on-- if not hostile to-- women candidates, but where progress is on the horizon. Democratic women made the top two in northern Congressional, Senate and Assembly races. With the election in 2018 of Senator Melissa Hurtado of Sanger, more women up and down the I-5 corridor are taking an interest, and CTGCA is on the ground to identify and guide rising stars. And, two women in the Inland Empire will face off in two different Senate runoffs in 2020.

→ **Women (and men) candidates are flooding the field in open seats.**

With 12 year term limits, the open seat is gold. Expect larger and larger fields of candidates whenever a seat becomes vacant. The preparation CTGCA offers our Recruits can make or break.

→ **Credentials, experience, and picking your race dramatically increase the likelihood of a “job promotion.”**

Progressive women candidates with experience in public service fared much better than candidates who would have been new to elected office. Similarly, women who ran in *open* seats advanced to November much more often than those who challenged an incumbent of either party.

## **Our Conclusions?**

→ **2020 is shaping up to be another “overperforming” year for women, but not in the way 2018 might have suggested.**

2018 wasn't an outlier, as women candidates continue to increase their numbers even with fewer open and competitive seats this cycle. While the

increase in numbers is incremental and includes more GOP women, any addition is a welcome sign that momentum for more women candidates continues, especially as they ascend from the Assembly to the Senate.

➔ **To get beyond incremental change and into 50/50 territory, slow and steady will NOT win the race.**

2020 confirmed for us that the right women, with the right preparation, in the right seats, are tough to beat. Close the Gap's strategy starts with targeting open seats well ahead of elections and recruiting progressive women who have substantive relationships with their communities. That's what moves more women into office faster.

But hitting our goal of 50% women by 2028 hinges on preparing to [Mine the Motherlode](#) of open seats ahead. We can make big gains, but only if we have more Recruiters working with more prospective candidates beginning in 2020. That's where you come in.

**Become a monthly donor [here](#) and receive the full memo** (and our appreciation over the challenging months ahead)!

## **WEBINAR**

# **REGISTRATION IS OPEN FOR CTGCA'S SPRING WEBINAR!**

Local officeholders often make fantastic candidates for the State Legislature and other partisan seats. But the transition from a message and base that positions you as a neutral civil servant, to one that takes a side, can be complex to navigate.

**Join us and allied experts to explore best practices for non-partisan candidates entering the partisan fray.**

**Moderator:**

Dr. Pratima Gupta, CTGCA Executive Board Member

PLEASE JOIN OUR FREE LUNCHTIME WEBINAR

# From Non-Partisan Office to Partisan Progressive Candidate

Friday April 17th from Noon to 1pm (PST)

MEET OUR PANELISTS:



**DR. PRATIMA GUPTA**  
(Moderator)  
CTGCA Executive Board Member



**AMBER BAUER**  
Executive Director of  
UFCW Western States Council



**HON. JANE KIM**  
Former San Francisco  
Supervisor



**JOHANNA SILVA WAKI**  
West Coast State & Local Regional  
Director of Emily's List

## Panelists:

Amber Bauer, Executive Director of UFCW Western States Council

Hon. Jane Kim, Former San Francisco Supervisor

Johanna Silva Waki, West Coast State & Local Regional Director of Emily's List

**REGISTER TODAY**

**Our webinars are free, but our groundbreaking campaign to reach gender parity in California does require resources!**

**DONATE**

*Special note: as of this week, we have upgraded our internal systems. Thank you in advance for your generous contributions, which will now be processed via EveryAction instead of ActBlue.*

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## NEWS

# BUZZWORTHY

### CTGCA TAKES PRIDE IN THE SUCCESS OF OUR SAN DIEGO ALLIES:

**HATS OFF** to [Nora Vargas](#), one of our original Advisory Board Members, who placed in the top 2 for an open San Diego Supervisor seat. She'll now run off in November. And to San Diego Councilmember [Barbara Bry](#), a moving force behind our ally RUN WOMEN RUN. Barbara overcame a 3,000 vote deficit on election day to move into the #2 spot by 1,000 votes.

With provisional ballots still to count, nothing is assured. That said, what scrappers these women are!

### WOMEN PHILANTHROPISTS EMBRACE A POLITICAL PORTFOLIO

"I was sitting in my office, wincing at the mid-afternoon sun bouncing off the gold dome perched atop the New Hampshire State House five years ago. The slant of the light created a glare that made it hard for me to look interested in the droning of a DC consultant who had cornered me there."

The post [Funding to Elect Women Needs to Happen at Every Level](#) appeared first on [Philanthropy Women](#).

[Read on »](#)



### **THANK YOU MADAM PRO TEM**

A special shout out to the busiest woman in California, President **Pro Tem of the State Senate Toni Atkins** for making time to join our LA reception and program at Lionsgate in Santa Monica on February 28th. Some people talk about supporting more women for office but Senator Atkins makes it a priority. We could not appreciate you more.



*Hon. Toni Atkins (center) at CTGCA's February Lionsgate event with distinguished panelists Laphonza Butler, Host Heather Somaini, Susan Dunlap & Moderator Susannah Delano.*

## **HATS OFF FOR TIMELINESS:**

Emerge Launches “Campaigning Through a Crisis” Webinar Series.

[Learn more »](#)

# EMERGE

## *Campaigning through Crisis: Webinar Series*

Join us for a five-part webinar series  
on how to run for office during a  
pandemic.

- 3/19 5:30 PT/8:30 ET - Campaign Plan
- 3/24 5:30 PT/8:30 ET - Communications
- 3/26 5:30 PT/8:30 ET - Field
- 3/31 5:30 PT/8:30 ET - Fundraising
- 4/2 5:30 PT/8:30 ET - Online Organizing

Register here: [bit.ly/crisiswebinarseries](https://bit.ly/crisiswebinarseries)

### GET IT, GEN Z!

Read Teen Vogue's article on the importance of women's political representation [here](#).



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