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FORWARD TO A FRIEND →

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

# OUR COMMITMENT TO BLACK WOMEN: "THIS LINE SHALL NOT BE BROKEN"

California's history has been enriched by the sixteen Black women who have served in its Legislature. But there have only been [sixteen](#).

Four of the sixteen, [Assemblymembers Dr. Shirley Weber](#), [Autumn Burke](#), [Sydney Kamlager-Dove](#) and [Senator Holly Mitchell](#) are current legislators, all southern Californians.

Congresswoman [Barbara Lee](#) is the most recent Black woman from north of Los Angeles to have served in the State Legislature.



## Hon. Barbara Lee

1990-1996 | California State Assembly

1996-1998 | California State Senate

Among these sixteen are barrier breakers, system changers and many "firsts." [Yvonne Braithwaite Burke](#) led the way in the Assembly in the 1960's and then

became the first Black woman from California elected to Congress. She then became the first member of Congress to deliver a child while serving, and the first to secure maternity leave (that child was current Assemblymember [Autumn Burke](#)).



Assemblywoman [Maxine Waters](#), who came into the Legislature in the mid-70's, today chairs the powerful Banking and Finance Committee in the US House of Representatives. Assemblywoman [Barbara Lee](#) led progressive efforts across the nation with her lone vote against the war in Iraq as Oakland's Congresswoman, then chaired the Congressional Black Caucus. Lee is today the most senior woman of color in Congressional leadership. [Karen Bass](#)

served first as Speaker of the California Assembly, the first Black woman in the nation's history to serve as the Speaker of a state house, going on to Congress and chairing the House Subcommittee on Africa.

These are just a few examples of the accomplishments of these powerhouse women who first learned their craft in the California Legislature.

The individual achievements and collective impact of California's Black women legislators makes us proud. But the disparity in their total numbers should alarm us. With no Black women serving today from northern California and only four from the south, we must work to ensure the continuation of these distinguished lines of public servants, and add to them.

**As Close the Gap California recruits to achieve gender parity in the Legislature, we are committed to increasing the number of Black women who make policy for our state.**

Our campaign will continue to consult with Black women in the Legislature to identify prospects, and encourage departing members to identify possible successors. We will keep collaborating with Black women's political organizations on the ground in our target districts, at search parties and in co-hosting our annual recruiting event. We invite peer assessment and recommendations. And this year, with guidance from our Executive Board, we will formalize our commitment to address racial disparities as well as others that persist in legislative representation, on our way to reaching 50% women.

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**EVENT**

**SAVE THE DATE L.A.**

Friday, February 28, 2020  
5:00 PM-7:00 PM

**VIP Host Reception**

5:00 - 5:30pm

**General Reception**

5:30 - 6:00pm

**Panel Discussion**

6:00 - 7:00pm

**LOCATION**

Lionsgate  
2700 Colorado Ave  
Santa Monica, CA 90404

**SUGGESTED CONTRIBUTION  
LEVELS**

Visionary	\$10,000
Ally	\$5,000
Champion	\$2,500
Sponsor	\$1,000
Supporter	\$500
Friend	\$250
Young Professional	\$100

**PLEASE RSVP AT**

[bit.ly/ctgca-feb28](https://bit.ly/ctgca-feb28)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
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CALIFORNIA**

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DISCUSSION WITH**

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*SCRB STRATEGIES*

**HEATHER SOMAINI**  
*LIONSGATE*

**SUE DUNLAP**  
*PLANNED PARENTHOOD*

**SUSANNAH DELANO**  
*CLOSE THE GAP CALIFORNIA*

Paid for by Close the Gap California  
555 Bryant St. #241  
Palo Alto, CA 94301



*Join CTGCA and Pro Tem Atkins February 28th for a dynamic discussion about living and working in stubbornly inequitable times, and how women- and*

women LGBTQ champions in particular- are rebalancing the scales of representation for the larger good!

## NEWS

# BUZZWORTHY

### ASM. GONZALEZ A FORCE FOR WORKERS

“ One of California’s most influential legislators, she has written laws to expand the rights of workers, women and immigrants. In most cases, success has come not in spite of her willingness to pick a fight but because of it.”

[Read full LA Times article here](#)



Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez (D-San Diego) speaks at an August rally in Sacramento. (Rich Pedroncelli / Associated Press)

### THE 19TH. COMING THIS SUMMER.

Spread the word!

[Click here for more information](#)

# THE 19th\*

## THE NATIONAL PICTURE

Almost 500 Black Women Ran for Office in 2018

[5 Barrier Breaking Black Women Officeholders](#)



"WE CHANGE THE STORY:"

Stacey Abrams wants more female candidates because 'we change the story'

[Stacey Abrams on Good Morning America](#)



Stacey Abrams speaks at the University of New England, Jan. 22, 2020, in Portland, Maine.

## 'WHEN WOMEN SUCCEED, AMERICA SUCCEEDS'

From Founding CTGCA Advisory Boardmember Susan Rose.

[Read article here](#)



Credit: Human Rights by Pavel Constantin, Romania



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