



2026 MIDYEAR REPORT

POWER IN PARITY

An Initiative of CLOSE THE GAP CALIFORNIA

POWER IN PARITY: A WINNING FRONTLINE STRATEGY

As the far right seeks to undermine our democracy through redistricting wars that threaten to decimate decades of progress, state legislatures are the most important arena to protect voting rights and insist on reflective representation in the years ahead.

Close the Gap is hard at work on the front lines: our supporters planted seeds in 2025 so that our proven recruiting model could expand to build representative leadership pipelines on behalf of 76 million Californians, Floridians and Ohioans who make up a vital part of our democracy. Momentum is strong and those seeds are taking ROOT in 2026!

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE CLASS OF 2026: ON TO NOVEMBER

10 members of the Class of 2026 made it through their primary elections and are heading to the November runoff, including 80% women of color and 20% LGBTQ+ candidates.

These courageous leaders could bring our Legislature to parity a full cycle earlier than targeted!

ADVANCING CLASS OF 2026



Dr. Amy Slavensky
AD 7



Annalisa Perea
AD 31



Deborah Klein Lopez
AD 42



Leila Namvar
AD 47



Clarissa Cervantes
AD 58



Dr. Paula Swift
AD 70



Mara Elliott
SD 40



Dr. Ida Obeso-Martinez
AD 36



Dr. Sara Deen
AD 66



Jessie Lopez
AD 68

WE'VE PUT DOWN ROOTS: CLOSE THE GAP FLORIDA

When we said Close the Gap was expanding our proven strategy to improve the national political outlook by 2030, we were serious. First up: Florida!

With an upcoming wave of open seats and recent red to blue shifts in multiple state legislative districts, the political tide is turning in the Sunshine State.

INTRODUCING OUR FIRST-EVER FLORIDA STATE DIRECTOR: SABRINA BOUSBAR!

Sabrina now leads our pilot program to recruit outstanding women for the Florida State Legislature in 2028 and 2030. We're thrilled to have her expertise on board!



PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT: FLORIDA PIPELINE PROJECT!

We're proud to formally announce our partnership with the Florida Pipeline Project and the broader Florida Alliance ecosystem. Together, we'll advance gender parity in one of the country's most dynamic and consequential political landscapes.

The enthusiastic response from Florida leaders has been clear: *there is strong alignment, real opportunity, and a shared commitment to building a more representative future.*

The time is right to make a lasting impact on the national stage where it's needed most, and our proven model is built to take advantage of opportunities like these.

Learn more at CloseTheGapCA.org/Florida!



Close the Gap Senior Advisor Dr. Dee Bremond and Florida Pipeline Project Senior Advisor Lisa Peth at the November 2025 Power in Parity Gala.



Screenshot of Democracy Summit Zoom panelists including Susannah Delano, Lindsey Drath of the Forward Party, Liuba Grechen Shirely of Vote Mama, A'shanti Gholar of Emerge America, Anatheia Chino of Advance Native Political Leadership, Jennifer Pierotti Lim of Republican Women for Progress

SUSANNAH SHINES WITH REPRESENTWOMEN

Executive Director Susannah Delano put CTG's uniquely successful recruiting model front and center at RepresentWomen's 2026 Democracy Solutions Summit, alongside a powerhouse panel of women leaders from across the country.

The event is the only democracy-focused summit in the United States featuring an all-women program. Susannah discussed CTG's targeted strategy - including how individualized coaching and analysis of the candidate field helps women overcome potential doubts.

EXPANDING DOWN BALLOT: COUNTY BOARDS RECRUITMENT

In order to reinforce the pipeline of accomplished women ready to jump to state and federal levels for generations to come, **Close the Gap is now recruiting prospective candidates for targeted County Boards of Supervisors**, in addition to the State Legislature. Informed by new original research from 501(c)4 partner **Close the Gap Catalyst** outlining how deeply unrepresentative these powerful political bodies are, we are already hard at work transforming the state of play by recruiting progressive women for open and flippable County Board seats in 2028.

"The policies shaped at the county level often determine whether equity is delivered or denied... We need leaders at the County level who are ready to co-govern with courage. Close the Gap has been a powerful partner in ensuring those leaders are in position at the state level. Now, by going down ballot, they're strengthening the pipeline of County Supervisors to meet this moment and to serve generations to come."

- Los Angeles County Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell



CTG'S PROVEN MODEL AT WORK: CA CLASS OF 2028 ALREADY IN FORMATION!



Since 2022, we've capitalized on the Motherlode of open seat opportunities created by term limits and redistricting. *2028 is the year we've been targeting to reach parity since the beginning!*

We held our first Sacramento Symposium event for prospective 2028 candidates this June.



From left: Panelists Asm. Tina McKinnor, CTG Senior Political Consultant Rose Kapolczynski, Hon. Cristina Garcia, and Asm. Pilar Schiavo at the 2024 Sacramento Symposium.

Symposiums are CTG's flagship program, providing women considering a legislative or supervisorial run with powerful connections, workshops, and advice from all-star allies and political influencers.

CTG ELEVATES WOMEN AT THE CADEM CONVENTION

We had a blast in San Francisco mobilizing our A-Team to recruit at the 2026 California Democratic Party Convention! The convention gathered Dems of all stripes to endorse candidates, train activists and organize to win campaigns across the state.

Our Party For Parity kicked off the busy weekend with a Galentine's-themed SMASH! We're so proud that this groundbreaking joint event with our allies has become THE place to be at every Convention, bringing a powerful sisterhood of women together for connections and solidarity.



MAKE A GIFT

Help us grow the Power in Parity Initiative to achieve legislative parity AND expand to Ohio, Florida, and 14 California counties by giving a contribution today!

[You can give online here.](#)

If you prefer to donate by check,
please mail it to:

Close the Gap California
1700 Tribute Road, Suite 201
Sacramento, CA 95815

LEARN MORE

Contact Diane@CloseTheGapCA.org to:

- Learn more about our plans to expand down ballot in California and nationwide
- Explore options to give charitable dollars to the Power in Parity Institute 501(c)3 or Close the Gap Catalyst 501(c)4
- Make a gift of stock or initiate a gift from a Donor Advised Fund
- Direct your gift toward a particular Close the Gap initiative

With your support, we are planting the seeds that ensure strong women rise up and down the ballot across three critical states in 2028.

Thank you for believing and investing in our unique, research-backed strategy.