



# WOMEN'S EQUALITY 2020 LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OUTCOMES REPORT

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To commemorate the Centennial Celebration of the 19th amendment, women's right to vote, Santa Clara County approached the year as an opportunity to continue advocating for equal rights for ALL residents. The Board of Supervisors approved the creation of the [Women's Equality 2020 Leadership Council](#), a 46-member body committed to increasing women's political equality and in protecting women's suffrage by focusing on four key work group areas: Youth Engagement, Voter Engagement, Census Participation and Centennial Celebration.

The Office of Women's Policy supported the [Women's Equality 2020 Leadership Council](#) by forming, co-chairing, and staffing four work groups to champion democracy in our community and continuously recruit and target outreach for underrepresented members of the community in local governance.

Together, the Leadership Council and the Office of Women's Policy collaborated on a concerted effort to coordinate a year-long celebration to honor the sacrifices made by generations before us, stand in solidarity, and recognize the need to continue mobilizing for our present-day community and generations to come. Each workgroup approached public engagement using the principles of participatory democracy to advocate for broad participation, inclusive practices, and expansive goals.



*“Democracy is not a state. It is an act, and each generation must do its part to help build what we called the Beloved Community, a nation and world society at peace with itself.”*

~ John Lewis



## Census Engagement Workgroup

Co-chaired by the Office of Census, a work group focusing solely on women in Santa Clara County convened to create a workplan to reach a subset of women in previously identified Hard to Count populations. The group decided on single mothers, low-wage workers (women) and elderly women. The workplan is available under "[Publications](#)" on the Office of Women's Policy website..

### Outcomes:

In December of 2019, the Census Engagement Work Group held a WE2020 All Women Count Census Champion Workshop in South County to bring accurate Census information for greater community participation. Forty-eight individuals from community organizations and individual leaders attended and pledged to become Census Champions.

The young adult training and career readiness program, Year Up Bay Area contacted the leadership council for a work group speaker in June 2020 to speak with youth on the importance of Census and how the data affects our shared communities.

In September of 2020, the Office of Women's Policy livestreamed and recorded a video with the Office of Census on the importance of Census engagement to a viewer audience of sixty-seven on Facebook and six on YouTube.

Despite the continuation of Shelter in place during the Covid-19 pandemic, Santa Clara County's self-response rate is recorded at a high of 77.7%.

### Self-Response by County

This map features self-response rates from households that responded to the 2020 Census online, by mail, or by phone. Rates can be viewed in [rankings here](#).



### Recommendation #1: Keep on Counting

For the County of Santa Clara to create a Civic Engagement Office and/or program with the purpose of continuing to engage hard to count populations in the myriad of ways individuals and communities can become civically engaged. Continuing to maintain and develop relationships with

underrepresented communities builds a relationship of trust with local governance and will maximize census participation in 2030. With the ongoing COVID19 pandemic, engaging in trusting relationships is key to keeping communities healthy and recovering from the devastation being wrecked by the epidemic.

*“The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them.”*

*~ Ida B. Wells-Barnett*

## **Voter Engagement Workgroup**

Working in partnership with the Registrar of Voters, this work group was co-chaired with Shannon Bushey to educate the community on the newly implemented Voter's Choice Act and process for voter registration.

### **Outcomes:**

Leadership Council meetings provided an understanding of the Voter's Choice Act (VCA) and the history of voter suppression providing an opportunity for work group members to proactively execute voter education with an awareness of the historical challenges that could be present.

Train the trainer workshops were held with the purpose for stakeholders and interested community members to attend and fill out pledge cards to commit to hosting their own trainings on voter registration. In September of 2019, the work group hosted a Train the Train Workshop with an attendance of 113 community leaders who pledged to

educate their communities on the VCA, its changes, and the increased opportunities for voting.

Evergreen Community College hosted a “Democracy and Diversity” seminar as part of their “Democracy's Future Crucial Conversations Series” developed by a current council member which provided access opportunities for both Voter Engagement and Census Engagement to over seven classes in our locality.

A high school voter pre-registration pilot initiative organically manifested through the passion and work of Voter Engagement and Youth Engagement members. The groups heavily invested in this initiative include the League of Women Voters, Santa Clara County of Education, Office of Women's Policy and the Registrar of Voters. An educational video and related PSA's were created and shared before the November 3, 2020 Presidential Election. Students, teachers, and administrators have the ability to sign up to request the video and community volunteer facilitators to teach the registration process.

### ***Recommendation #1: Raise the Vote – Expand access to civic voter education and voter registration to community colleges for girls and women throughout the county***

Community colleges have a unique opportunity to educate students on civics and provide opportunities for voter education and registration in easily accessible locations. Through the partnerships developed by the leadership council, the Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters, League of Women Voters, and other community

partners can access local community college campuses to partner on outreach and engagement efforts and grow the work that began with this Council.

**Recommendation #2: Break the Wall – Develop on-going civics participation opportunities with the K-12 public and private schools throughout the county**

Engaging youth in social issues that directly impact them and their support structures, including their families and communities and continuing to provide educational resources for voting is a strategic and inclusive way to develop informed citizens. Civic engagement is a building block to voting, participating, and having all voices heard, and our youth can lead the way.

*“It only takes one person to start a hashtag trend...”*

*..think about what directly impacts [you] or [your] friends and think what systemic issues contribute to that issue.. and who can I speak to about that..find the very very root of the problem”*

*~ Emma González*

**Youth Engagement Workgroup**

Co-chaired with Dr. Dewan from the Santa Clara County of Education (SCCOE) as part of [the Power of Democracy: Civic Engagement Initiative](#), the Youth Engagement Work Group mobilized to authentically uplift youth voices to participate in civic engagement with County and Community stakeholders and create a space where

all voices are welcome. Identifying target areas throughout Santa Clara County to recruit youth up to twenty-four years of age from traditionally disengaged areas, group members set out to recruit youth to plan an event designed with peers in mind on the importance of civic engagement and community participation. Active participants in the work group presented the framework and opportunity for a youth content driven civic engagement event and presented to community youth groups and individuals including Youth Commissions and Task Forces across the Bay area.

**Outcomes:**



The original in-person event was cancelled due to the global Covid-19 pandemic and a [3-day virtual YVL2020 event](#) was created for youth to attend on three Saturdays. Workshop facilitators selected with youth survey input in mind provided alternative perspectives and methods of engaging in community based participatory action and research.

	Workshop	Zoom
Day 1 – May 23, 2020	Virtual Town Hall with Emma González	40
Day 2 – May 30, 2020	Finding Your Voice/Telling Your Story with	40+

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	Tyson Amir + youth facilitators	
Day 3 – June 6, 2020	Re-imagine Silicon Valley-Design Challenge with Bobbie Reyes and Alfredo Mathew the III + facilitators	50+ (85 registered)

*“I loved that it was inspiring, and a reminder that even though we're stuck at home there's still ways we can be politically involved.”*

*~ Day 1 participant*

The virtual town hall with American Activist Emma González facilitated by local activist Sera Fernando spoke directly to issues surveyed youth had indicated interest in learning more about; mental health, protecting oneself, how to learn about and advocate on issues, the experience of entering university and more were thoughtfully explored for the benefit of youth attendees from multiple counties.

*“I really enjoyed hearing from activist Emma Gonzalez because as a teen herself, she was able to connect with the other teens. Even though one of the organizers apologized for the “free flow of words” during the breakout sessions, I actually really appreciated her authenticity.”*

*~ Day 1 participant*

Two days after the virtual town hall, while sheltering in place, the death of George Floyd made national headlines. Five days later, workshop facilitator Tyson Amir, host Sera Fernando and organizer Olivia Santillan decided to provide youth a safe space to share their thoughts and feelings as public and social spaces and opportunities were no longer available during shelter in place, which included a

large workshop and smaller breakout rooms

Youth attendees had the opportunity to submit their work for publishing in [Black Boy Poems by Tyson Amir](#).

*“I liked being able to apply what we heard from Tyson Amir to our discussion about the impact writing, literature, and expression as a whole has on our society when it comes to making change.”*

*~ Day 2 participant*

On the last day of #YVL2020, Bobbie Reyes spoke to the demonstrations occurring in real time and the feelings she experienced while isolated and socially distanced from peers and family as a new university graduate. The helplessness in face of social unrest during a pandemic felt by many participants and acknowledged by the day's speaker provided another voice relevant to youth activism. Bobbie Reyes and Alfredo Mathew the III provided an educational opportunity following a business model elevator pitch to be developed and refined so youth could use their work in personal and professional environments.

Youth attendees had the opportunity to submit their elevator pitch to Alfredo Mathew the III for PSA recordings.

*“I loved being able to create an elevator pitch, because it was out of my comfort zone. However, I felt safe in that small group and I could just speak what I wanted to. I felt accomplished and like I had made progress today in those breakout rooms.”*

*~ Day 3 participant*

After the event youth who attended YVL2020 indicated the desire to engage

at a deeper level with local government to uplift and represent their peers.

Administration from a South County located high school contacted SCCOE to develop a ten-week Civic engagement program using the YVL model with content relevant to South County called: YVL MUSD

After seeing the authentic way youth voices were uplifted by Santa Clara County, The Commonwealth Club in San Francisco connected with the Office of Education to host a civics event facilitated by youth speakers including Angela Fusche from Day 2 with Tyson Amir and Dr. Dewan, County Superintendent of Schools from the Santa Clara County of Education. This was a rare opportunity for students to speak with adults making decisions on their lives during a pandemic. The video is available [here](#).

Partisquad board members who facilitated breakout sessions on the last day reached out to County departments and the Office of Education to create a Youth Equity event with both a virtual and an in-person socially distant event well-attended by local elected officials who spoke on anti-bullying and the resilience that led them to run for public office diversifying local governance.

***Recommendation #1: Break Ground – Create a permanent partnership with the Office of Education civics program dedicated to creating multiple avenues for youth to become civically engaged in***

*social justice issues in Santa Clara County*

Support authentic youth voice[s] in local governance from a social justice perspective by adopting an intentional Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)<sup>1</sup> approach with the Santa Clara County Office of Education to engage youth in critical inquiries that address negative social and economic conditions in schools and communities to cultivate young people's critical insights/consciousness and resistances. Develop nationwide partnerships with existing groups active in youth participatory action research.

***Recommendation #2: Uplift Voices – Collaborate on annual youth voice live summits executed by the Office of Education and the County Division of Equity and Social Justice to propel youth towards full political equality.***

Engaging youth and their representatives as leaders in shaping the actions of the County by continuing to listen, uplift and work with diverse youth across the county as a continuation of valuing different perspectives.

*"My mother would look at me and she'd say, 'Kamala, you may be the first to do many things, but make sure you are not the last,' That's why breaking those barriers is worth it. As much as anything else, it is also to create that path for those who will come after us."*

*~ Kamala Harris*

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<sup>1</sup> <http://yparhub.berkeley.edu/>



## Centennial Commemoration Call to Action Group

This work group co-chaired by Past President of American Association of University Women San Jose (AAUW SJ), Sharon Bouska. To commemorate the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment, stakeholders across the county were invited to plan commemorative and outreach activities to support and promote a year-long celebration of the achievement previous generations fought for in order for historically marginalized groups to access the privileges available today. Participants committed to leading with acknowledging that not all women won their voting rights a 100 years ago, that we are here because of the brave women who fought a century ago, and we must continue to expand and include all communities for true participatory democracy and equitable civic engagement.

### Outcomes:

Starting with a kickoff march and rally in 2019, a year-long County-wide celebration welcoming the centennial year began.



Asked to have WE2020 Council members speak on the Equal Rights Amendment, the Saratoga Historical Foundation was the first community event with a full panel of WE2020 Leadership Council members presenting to a diverse audience on this critical subject.

A Countywide passport created to document women's events throughout the County for all of 2020 was distributed until Sheltering in Place. A directory of Women's History events, International Women's events and Women's suffrage activities was drafted and abandoned once the pandemic occurred as in person events and activities were prohibited.

The 2020 Bay Area Womxn's March was a public outing where WE2020 Leadership Council members showed up in droves to support the women and girls in Santa Clara County.

K-12 engagement suffrage activities were executed and the Silicon Valley Reads poster contest was celebrated virtually.

Originally planned as in-person events modeled after the shopgirl inclusion work led by SF activist Selina Solomons, the work group executed three virtual Soup Salad Suffrage events for different

audiences all skillfully layered to offer something for everyone.

	Attendees	FB views	Youtube views
Day 1	156	694	55
Day 2	153	295	3
Day 3	95	128	7

The We Shine ~ We Vote Community event with the Japantown Community Congress of San Jose (JCCsj) to kick off the week of early voting was the final event under the work group workplan and selected for the shared history of Japanese American citizens who have lived through the atrocities, which continue to happen at the border today.

Attendees	FB	YT
106	50	n/a

**Recommendation #1:** *Continue to advocate for equity for women and girls including leadership opportunities, economic stability, and pandemic recovery efforts*

Statistics are showing that more women than men have lost their jobs due to Covid-19 and the numbers are climbing every day. Women already make \$0.80 to every \$1 made by men and the pay gap is increasingly becoming wider. The county is engaging in a pay equity effort which will benefit from community partners on workforce opportunities for women because of the disparities in job losses being suffered by women due to the pandemic.

Financial feminism<sup>2</sup> is advocating for financial equality between genders and how we can and will focus on raising women out of poverty because only when basic needs are met we can participate in thoughtful discussion and democratic decision making.

**Recommendation #2:** *Coalition Build – Solidarity across various organizations and existing Brown Act Bodies to work together in unison to reflect the community strong roots of Santa Clara County*

For the County of Santa Clara to approve a resolution where County and Community partners work together to widen existing networks and go into communities to develop working relationships and pathways to civics to encourage true dialogue and opportunities to affect public policy.

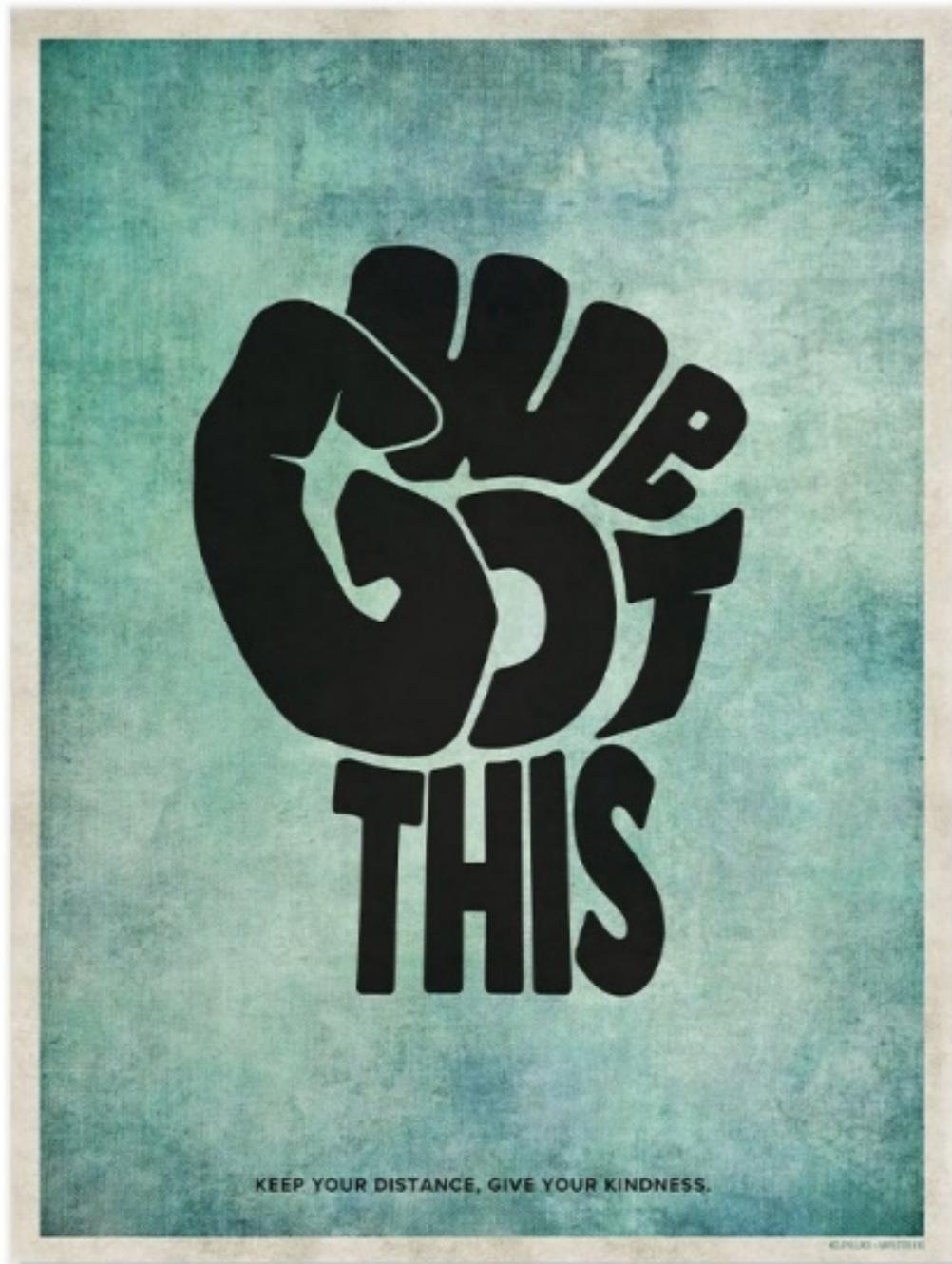
“You're not alone in all this  
 You're not alone, I promise  
 Standing together we can do anything  
 World, you're not alone in all this  
 You're not alone, I promise  
 Standing together we can do anything”

~ Sia

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<sup>2</sup> Predominantly this conversation right now refers to financial equality between women and men, but as more people identify outside the gender binary,

we can expect the conversation to widen. (Perez n.d.)<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bravelygo.co/contact-us/>



## Resource Index

### Resource Reading

Elisa Camahort Page's book for activism and advocacy, [Roadmap for Revolutionaries](#)

Young Women's Freedom Center [Reports and Publications](#)

Office of Gender Based Violence Prevention [Reports and Publications](#)

Asian American Pacific Islander Women Lead [Reports, Resources and Media](#)

Youthprise [Youth Participatory Action Research Toolkit](#)

### Resource Videos

[#YouthVoiceLive2020 videos](#)

[Commonwealth Club Civics video](#)

[Soup! Salad! Suffrage! videos](#)

[Census conversation video](#)

[We Shine ~ We Vote video](#)

### Speaker List

Desiree Victor, YWFC, [www.youngwomenfree.org](http://www.youngwomenfree.org)

Dr. Connie Wun, AAPIWL, [www.conniewunphd.com](http://www.conniewunphd.com)

Sera Fernando, SV Pride, [Connect on LinkedIn](#)

Michele Dauber, [Enough is Enough Voter Project](#)

Neysa Fligor, <https://www.losaltosca.gov/directory-listing/neysa-fligor>

Elisa Camahort Page, [www.elisacp.com](http://www.elisacp.com)

Erin Vilardi, Run Vote Lead, [www.VoteRunLead.org](http://www.VoteRunLead.org)

Susannah Delano, Close the Gap CA, [www.CloseTheGapCA.org](http://www.CloseTheGapCA.org)

Karla Mondragon, [Connect on LinkedIn](#)

Shruti Ravisankar

Karrington Kenney, [Connect on LinkedIn](#)

Japantown Community Congress San Jose, <https://www.jcc-sj.org/>

Tyson Amir, <https://tysonamir.com/>

Alfredo Mathew the III, <https://www.workingworld.co/about>

Bobbie Reyes, <https://www.bobbiereyes.com/my-story>

American Association of University Women San Jose, <https://sanjose-ca.aauw.net/>

League of Women Voters, <https://www.lwv.org/local-leagues/lwv-san-josesanta-clara>

Amplifier.org for activism, <https://amplifier.org/>

Office of the Census, <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/census/Pages/home.aspx>

Registrar of Voters, <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/rov/Pages/Registrar-of-Voters.aspx>

Office of Women's Policy, <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/owp/Pages/owp.aspx>

Santa Clara County Office of Education, <https://www.sccoe.org/>