



San Mateo County Democratic Party

Chair's Letter

July 2019

Dear Democrats,

You are receiving this Chair's Letter a few days in advance of Independence Day. I hope that you take this opportunity to spend some extra time with your family and friends, and reflect on the state of our nation.

I'm of mixed emotions as we move towards this most patriotic of days. As a first generation American and the child of immigrants, I was raised to view Independence Day as a day of great reverence for our nation - beyond the extra day off for pool time and BBQ's, as most of my friends saw it. My dad never failed (and still never fails!) to remind us how lucky we are to grow up - not just in the United States - but in California, where my sisters and I would always have *options and choices* far beyond the ones we would have had my parents stayed in their home country.

A combination of luck and privilege brought my parents and grandparents here as documented immigrants in 1981. They weren't escaping famine or war or tragedy when they chose to come here - they simply wanted to do better for their family, more than what could be provided in Pakistan. They had access to family sponsors, finances, legal representation and, most importantly, time to wait out the visa process. And because of their luck and privilege, I was given many opportunities for which I remain grateful.

Many other immigrants, however, were not given the same grace bestowed to my parents and grandparents. Many immigrants were forced to make spur-of-the-moment decisions to cross borders or rivers in order to keep their families together and alive. Many immigrants continue to be incarcerated by *our very own government* in makeshift concentration camps along our border, some separated from their children, some being held in absolutely deplorable and inhumane conditions - for the simple fact that they dared enter our country without documentation.

Until this situation with our modern day concentration camps (and don't doubt that is what they are) is rectified, until refugee children are reunited with their parents, until we as a nation recognize the humanity in all of those currently incarcerated, until all migrants are *released*, Independence Day will ring hollow for me.

(Consider joining me in donating to Bay Area Border Relief to help those migrants in need of assistance: [Link](#))

Read on for more things you should know.

2020 Democratic Candidates Debate Watch Party

SMCDEMS were pleased to hold our Night 1 Watch Party at IBEW Hall on June 26th. Many thanks District 3's Steven Booker and to IBEW 617 for use of their union hall and to Nancy Yarbrough and Harini Krishnan for coordinating food. We were pleased to have ABC7News join us for the party. Click here to watch the news story: [Link](#).

2019 Club Chartering and Rechartering

Have you thought about starting your own Democratic club here in San Mateo County? Perhaps for your town, region or particular demographic? Now is the time to get serious! Email the Chair (chair@smcdems.org) to learn more about the process. All you need are 20 members to get started!

All 2019 club charters and re-charters for San Mateo County Democratic organizations are due to the San Mateo County Democratic Party by our July meeting (July 18), with payment, a copy of your bylaws and a roster of your members in good standing.

2019 Membership Dues

Membership dues for all elected, alternate and associate members should be paid in July for 2019-2020. Please visit our website at <http://www.smcdems.org/> and click on "Contribute."

July Meeting Preview

Our regular July meeting will take place on Thursday, July 18th at the Transport Workers Union Hall at 1521 Rollins Road in Burlingame. The meeting will start promptly at 7:30pm, following our social half hour at 7pm. Please join us. All Democrats are invited.

I remain available if you have any feedback on our SMCDEMS. You can reach me at chair@smcdems.org.

Sincerely,
Nicole Fernandez
Chair, SMCDEMS